

THE LONDON MERCURY

Vol. XVI No. 95

September, 1927

EDITORIAL NOTES

WE referred last month to the impending project for restoring and preserving the amenities of Stonehenge. Shortly after we wrote a letter, signed by the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, the Lord Lieutenant of Wilts., the President of the National Trust and the President of the Society of Antiquaries, appeared in the *Times* and other newspapers, and was warmly and generally supported. A first subscription list of £1,000 was announced, and an appeal was made for some £35,000.

THE ground within the "Stonehenge sky-line" is in various hands and several options have been arranged with the owners. The most important of all relates to a "lot" of some hundreds of acres on which stand the aerodrome and the rows of huts erected by the Government during the War. These were resigned by the Government to the owner of the land, and it is imperative that they should, now they are no longer of national utility, be destroyed. How they dwarf Stonehenge and ruin the view of it was well shown in a fine photograph published by the *Times*. Never, so long as they are there, will anyone, coming upon Stonehenge for the first time, receive the impression of awe which men of many generations before the war acknowledged; and the most ignorant visitor cannot refrain from commenting upon the bad manners of its modern neighbours. Something at least will have been done if a sufficient sum is raised to acquire no more than this section of the land.

BUT much more than this is aimed at: a total of over 1,400 acres in fact. The great bulk of this land is still unbuilt on, but an augury of what may come is provided by an unpleasing little growth called the Stonehenge Café which has sprung into existence this year close to the

café. If one man can buy a little plot for a café there is no reason why another should not confront the megaliths with a Stonehenge Garage all decked with petrol pumps in red and yellow. After all, there is distinctly an opening, commercially. Hordes of visitors come to Stonehenge by road, and were petrol pumps provided they would doubtless be used. So, for all we know, would be a cinema, a dance hall, or a residential hotel; and the last named might well lead to a Stonehenge Golf Course, with artificial bunkers on the Cursus and a fine Club-House on the Avenue. There is a great magic in the name "Stonehenge" and this vision, in an age of hardy entrepreneurs, is by no means fantastic. Those who prize the most famous of our ancient monuments cannot be satisfied until its surroundings are as firmly guaranteed as the actual stone circle itself, which, owing to the generosity of Sir Frank Chubb, is now safely in the custody of the Office of Works. There are some things which simply ought not to be in private hands. Stonehenge was one of these, as certainly as Westminster Abbey. It is quite conceivable that, had it not been for Sir Frank Chubb, some callous or hard-pressed owner of the future might have been tempted to sell the stones for shipment to America, where plenty of purchasers for them could certainly be found.



IT isn't, in that neighbourhood (finally) only a question of preventing building, destroying existing eyesores, securing an uninterrupted view of this mysterious monument in its lonely majesty: it is also a matter of preserving unimpaired for future examination one of the most interesting and fruitful of our archaeological sites. There is still a great deal of work to be done on Salisbury Plain, and recent developments arising from the addition of air-photography to the archaeologist's diagnostic weapons, suggest that much may be added to our knowledge of Ancient Britain in the near future. That the public interest in our past is greatly increasing is attested by the popularity of articles on Roman Britain and kindred antiquarian themes which have recently been given prominence by the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Express*. But no amount of vague public sympathy can avail to preserve either the amenities of Stonehenge or the interpretity of the other relics on Salisbury Plain: only two people are required to do all the damage conceivable, namely, the willing seller and the willing buyer, who too often in our civilisation conform in their social activities (whatever their private characters may be) to the habits of that monster, the Economic Man. The State, we have been assured, can do nothing in the matter of the surroundings of Stonehenge. They can only be saved if the willing buyer who desires to catch the tourist trade with his Stonehenge Shooting Gallery, or to run water-mains out with a view to the erection of Beautiful Stonehaven, is anticipated by a willing buyer who is willing to sacrifice a little in order that a national treasure should be preserved. The sum aimed at is small in comparison with those recently raised for Westminster Abbey and St.

Paul's, not to mention the Police. Every five shillings counts. The National Trust has agreed to administer whatever land may be bought. Cheques should be sent to the Secretary of the National Trust Stonehenge Fund, 7, Buckingham Palace Gardens, S.W.1, and crossed Barclay's Bank. We earnestly urge our readers to support the Fund to the best of their ability.

WE referred just now to the possibility of petrol pumps adjoining Stonehenge. The example is only an unusually striking one of a widespread ailment. We have just been spending a few days holiday running about the South and West of England in a car. It will be evident from that that we are none of your fanatical pedestrians who refer to motor-cars as Juggernauts, and complain that life is made intolerable by their fumes. We hold that the motor-car, like the wireless, is worth its disadvantages : which is more than can be said of many of the great inventions of the last hundred and fifty years. If we travel by car we must have petrol : if we want petrol we must be told where to find it. But surely some better (i.e. quieter) means of telling us could be devised than the present. Not only is each end (and the middle) of every village being decorated by scores of huge pumps in the most vivid colours conceivable, but the visual roar of the pumps is reinforced by an orchestra of tin advertisements plastered promiscuously over walls and doors. "Shell," "Shell," "Shell," "Pratt's," "B.P.," etc., etc., etc., vociferate in reds, yellows and Union Jacks on almost every mile of the main roads and in the obscurest hamlets on the side roads. Our haunts of ancient peace are becoming haunts of modern petrol.

SOME ironist among our draughtsmen of series pictures (*e.g.* "Fou-sgasse") might well find a subject in the development of a modern beauty-spot. There is a village with rows of thatched cottages, three or four fine old houses, a Tudor inn, an ancient elm, and a church tower brooding over all. A motorist arrives and is enthusiastic. Then (for he tells his friends) two motorists arrive. Then four. Then a dozen. The blacksmith sees his chance, and supersedes his forge by a garage and petrol station, suitably decorated. The brewers, finding that the business of the Fox and Grapes is going up, pull it down and erect a larger building in Ye Olde Tea Shoppe style with Dated 1500 written over the door and Built 1927 too evident everywhere. A mart for china dogs, pot lids, and fake chairs is opened. One by one the cottages are provided with shop windows or converted into Private Hotels. The accession of bungalows inhabited by peace-seekers, increases trade to such a point that Liptons, the International Tea Stores and such like macro-organisms arrive. Ultimately nothing is left of what was there before save the poor old church peeping over the new roofs. And one fine day perhaps the charabancers awake to the fact that what they came for is no longer there ; and the village, deserted but defiled, resumes its ancient obscurity.

MR. J. St. Loe Strachey died on August 26th at the age of 67. He had been in delicate health for years, after an illness his survival from which astonished the doctors. His place in the history of journalism is assured by his long and distinguished tenure of the editorship of the *Spectator*, which was a power in the land in days when the voices of six-penny weeklies were more easily heard, and which (for example) exercised a perceptible influence when it came out as "Unionist Free Trade" during the Chamberlain campaign. Mr. Strachey's intelligent Liberal-Conservatism was fortified by a wide background of historical and literary reading. No man of his time was readier with quotations from Bolingbroke and Burke. But he also knew Pope by heart. His two volumes of reminiscences were written in an admirably lucid style; he could turn a pretty metrical epigram (examples have appeared in our own pages) and late in life he showed his enterprise by writing a novel about a nineteenth-century revelation. He always had the courage of his convictions, and his convictions were never stereotyped.

LITERARY INTELLIGENCE

BROADCASTING is so patently a blessing to the blind that, in the first pleasurable realisation of the worlds of entertainment opened up to them, perhaps few of the public considered how the blind were to discover what it was to which they were going to listen. This need for an embossed programme, however, was realised by the National Institute for the Blind and, helped on by a broadcast appeal of the B.B.C. for the necessary funds, there is now in existence a *Braille Radio Times*, with a weekly circulation of 1,500 copies. This gives an authoritative resumé of programmes from the English and Welsh stations, and it is hoped, when the paper can be enlarged, to include Scotch and Irish programmes.

OF special interest to us in the National Institute's latest Report (for 1926-27) is the list of books published for the blind. This includes, as well as works by Meredith, Henry James, Stevenson, Trollope and Herman Melville, the *Kreutzer Sonata*, *Maria Chapdelaine* and *The Way of the World*. And when *Georgian Stories* of 1924 and works by Mr. John Buchan and Mr. Sabatini are found in the same list, it cannot be said that the Committee's taste runs in a groove. Among the books which it is hoped to publish next are selections from Plutarch's *Lives* and Hakluyt's *Voyages*; More's *Utopia*; poems by Edward Thomas, Alice Meynell, Andrew Marvell, Mr. Walter de la Mare and Mr. John Freeman; and two "thrillers"—*The Cask* and *The Red House Mystery*.

IN each case, the publishers and the author (if still living) have allowed the translation into Braille free of charge or royalty, but embossed books cost 8s. a volume, and as many blind people are also poor, the Institute allows to all blind purchasers throughout the British Empire a reduction of two-thirds of the cost price. This means that £12,000 a year is needed to keep publications up to the present standard and, sure as we are that many of our own readers will wish to help, we would suggest that those who cannot afford an annual subscription should sell all the old books that they do not read—there are always many in a house—and send the proceeds to the Institute at 224, Great Portland Street, W.1.

ACOURSE of lectures on *Art in the Nineteenth Century* will be given by Professor Percy Dearmer at King's College. Dates and subjects of the lectures, which begin at 5.30 p.m., are as follows:

- October 11th. English Landscape: Crome, Turner, Constable, Cotman.
- October 18th. France, Classic and Romantic: after L. David, Ingres, Delacroix.
- October 25th. Corot and the Barbizon School: Rousseau, Millet, Daubigny.
- November 1st. Pre-Raphaelitism: Madox-Brown, Rossetti, Millais, Holman Hunt.
- November 8th. The Fight With Industrialism: Ruskin, William Morris.
- November 15th. Academism.
- November 22nd. The Escape from Academism: Daumier, Courbet, Manet, Degas.
- November 29th. Impressionism: Camille Pissarro, Whistler, Sisley, Monet, Seurat.

December 6th. The Victors of To-Day: Cézanne, Renoir, Gauguin, Van Gogh.
 Tickets (1s. for one lecture or 7s. for the course) can be obtained between 10 and 4 at the College Office or before each lecture outside the Great Hall.

POETRY

SIX POEMS

A Convent Walk

IN green seclusion and unwavering light
In larkspur-haunted leisure and dim peace
They mount the blue crescendo of July.

Between these walls the bright abandoned world
Slips its impassioned pansies. Here the bold
Perfume of phlox is in the saintly air
And summer walks abroad.

Yet they pace
Admirably along the walk
Beside the balsam bed.
Two and two, face and face,
Head and head,
Hands and folded hands.
Admirably they talk.

Why did I think too late
To compass my fragility with stone ?

The Name

SOON as Creator God
Loosened His Hand
Man with his hazel rod
Scrawled in the sand.

“ What does My lambkin do ? ”
Queries the voice supernal.
“ I make a Name for you.
Be you eternal.”

Boundaries

I SOMETIMES think the boundaries of a land
 Most real when human thought has set them so.
 Though clover rooted in New Hampshire grow
 Seed in Vermont, though children hand in hand
 Walk the dividing line to school and stand
 One in Nevada, one in Idaho,
 Yet since man's mind has willed it, let them go,
 Keen as a watershed, clean as a brand.

For you and I have felt division wrought
 Between us by the thin, imperious blade
 And know too well how boundaries of thought
 Stand as in stone and will not be gainsayed,
 And how abashed before that airy line
 Must fall away forever your heart and mine.

The Descent

O UT of the height my pigeons falling
 Forsake their ancient sunning place.
 They come like Lucifer from grace
 Crying and calling.

With mournful light along their wings
 They sink and shine in windy rings
 Intent on earthly offerings.

Miracle

A S they were lost in this
 Ineffable device,
 Before they sighed and broke
 The enchanted kiss,
 The mantel clock spoke
 Intoning twice.

And afar awoke
 Out of the sleeping hive
 Another clock that said
 "Two—here—here—too."
 Incredibly alive
 In a world of the dead.

Late Harvest

EARTH has a sort of harvest for us all
 And with her hastens the laborious sun
 And sure the laws of compensation run.
 So if you pray for orchards in their prime
 Or viny shadows on your sunwise wall,
 Why, bide your cycle and the thing is done
 All in its time.

Oh my too lavish garden where I spent
 Sharp hours of hunger in the April land !
 Not yet the sated heart can understand
 Why plenty sickens in the mouth of want,
 Nor how those horny half-forgotten seeds
 So deeply thrust into the frosty ground
 Could burst and bloom and ripen and confound
 My hands with harvest far beyond their needs.

JESSICA NELSON NORTH

The Private View

I

THE lady dreamed. She was arrayed
 In courtly costume by her maid ;
 Her head was high, her heart was light ;
 She held a card for Heaven that night.

II

Along the Milky Way she went ;
 The stars their festal torches lent ;
 Over the gateway with its rune
 Was hung a full-orbed lamp, the moon.

III

She paused to spell the rune : it ran
 In every language known to man,
 " Knock ye and enter." As she knocked,
 Straightway she heard the gate unlocked.

IV

She entered, pleased. St. Peter came
 And bade her welcome there by name ;
 A gentleman to graces given,
 He was her escort over Heaven.

V

She passed exceeding pleasant hours
On streets of gold, in fields of flowers :
So many marvels were to see
Her vision swam most dizzily.

VI

They came at length, the guest and guide,
To where upon the countryside
Were many mansions, small and great,
Some very simple, some ornate.

VII

Each was alike in this alone,
However diverse, every one
Was rising by the constant care
Of countless angels toiling there.

VIII

Surprised, the lady looked and said,
" Are these the dwellings of the dead,
Each incomplete ? " He answered, " Nay,
The homes of those who live to-day ;

IX

Unfinished still is each you see
Around you in variety,
Until the owner come : to you
Is offered now this private view."

X

Delight she felt that she could learn
The homes her friends and foes would earn :
She thought, " returned to Earth, what power
Is mine by reason of this hour ! "

XI

Quickly she asked him, " Whose is this
That stands so loftily in bliss,
Serene and spacious, richly blazed,
And in a heart's-love garden raised ? "

XII

St. Peter, gently smiling, said,
" This is the mansion of your maid."
" Then glory be to such design ! "
She cried, eyes sparkling—" Which is mine ? "

THE LONDON MERCURY

XIII

Reluctantly he drew aside,
 Among the mansions she descried
 A patchwork cottage, very small,
 Most quaintly huddled on a wall.

XIV

Its steps were twisted, and its doors
 On rusty hinges leaned ; the floors
 Ran all aslant ; the rooms were bare ;
 Dry rot was spreading everywhere :

XV

Of broken scraps and fragments brought
 From buried wealth the whole was wrought.
 Speechless, she could no comment make,
 Assured there must be some mistake.

XVI

But with a luminous courtesy
 St. Peter made apology,
 Saying, his angels to defend,
 " We do our best with what you send."

XVII

The lady wept, and, weeping, stirred,
 Awoke and muttered, " How absurd !
 Things are not always as they seem,
 Thank God ! It was a hateful dream ! "

GORELL

TWO POEMS

The Dying Fall

WHEN the music's ended,
 Lady,
 Rest you then behind.
 We've been one, in music blended :
 Let flesh follow mind.

Let flesh follow mind

Now, lady.

'Twas flesh did convey
 Sound to souls and by it my words
 In your heart make way.

In your heart make way,
 Grave lady,
 Settle logic's debt.
 Though our souls alone were ravished
 We are mortal yet.

We are mortal . . . yet,
 Live lady,
 While flesh is our frame
 Love has power to loose its fetters
 In consuming flame.

*In consuming flame,
 Fast master,
 Hell's the place to burn.
 Sheep-gut haled us up to heaven ;
 But to earth we turn.*

But to earth we turn,
 Dull lady,
 There to be earth-wise.
 Even Eve still went with Adam,
 Leaving Paradise.

Leaving Paradise !
 'Las, lady,—
 We must, if we go
 From these rooms whose leafy arras
 Teach us what they know.

Teach us ! What they know,
 Quiet lady,
 Surely we may guess ?
 Have we fallen too low to answer
 When our instincts press ?

When our instincts press,
 My lady,
 Think how sweet will be
 Uncasing of the lute to play on't
 Our high symphony.

*Music rarefies,
 Young master,
 Hearts immoderate ;
 Quintessentialises passions
 To a rarer state.*

THE LONDON MERCURY

To a rarer state
 Of loving,
 Lady, how can we
 E'er attain, that scorn the proving
 Of such joys as be ?

Deep the music throbs
 And rushes,
 Rocks the bursting air.
 Then finds rest on cheeks as blushes,
 Sinks as gold on hair.

Light the candlelight
 Falls on you.
 Light your bodice springs
 (Needs no Orpheus to draw music,
 Lady, from such strings).

While the music runs—
 Quick, lady !—
 Urge it through each vein.
 Then when we are where are tapers
 It will out again.

It will out again,
 (Hey, lady !)
 Lifting us above
 (As that bird the brier outwarbles)
 Our more meagre love.

Our more meagre love,
 Gay lady
 (Since we're wise and old),
 Needs such trills and titivating
 That the charm may hold.

*Ah, but music finished,
 Master,
 Is of love's own kind :
 Both as echoes only sweetly
 Sound unto my mind.*

*As I listened, 'twas my last love,
 Master,
 Drew my smiles.
 My last, not your first, love—master !—
 Let you try your wiles.*

Chant for Memorial

WOULD we then be remembered ?
 Is it so great a thing
 That men as mad as we shall say
 " Wit was his conqueror," " He vilely loved,"
 " And to no knock did open," have them probe
 Into a life dismembered
 To know what we alone could tell
 And have forgot ?

Is this our aim ? Do all ways lead
 Here, but to this barren citadel ? and still,
 After life's years, have we the heart to think
 That men will kinder be
 To us, the disarmed dead ? Men cannot be
 Save what they are ; save dirt were gone,
 And pettiness, in death, leaving
 Nobility to build upon.

A dream ! Whither the vain days bend.
 For think, were our remembrance granted,
 Could we bear that such control
 As was our life, such love, such agony,
 Served only to secure
 Less than Gomorrah had
 For men to thank us for ?

One deed perhaps in twenty years, and then,
 Stretches of evil countless.
 Can we not rest and end the toil ?
 Death does not stir because we enter it,
 And Life outlives all lives.
 Can we not end and take our rest,
 Self, like ourselves, forgot ?

ROBERT HERRING

The Derelict

(Parable of a soul in extremity).

D RAPED with despair upon a glassy sea,
 Each sail hangs limp, for hope has fled from thee :
 Just the faint sound of water's lap within
 Thy hulk, tells the same tale of death therein—
 I sense, more than I see
 Thy lurch of agony—
 And then : still bubbles float upon a glassy sea.

ALICIA ELLARD

Ephemera

THE winds blow and stop :
The leaning headstones drop.

The dancers cease—they slip
And stiffen in Death's grip,

To lie from May to May
Disintegrated clay.

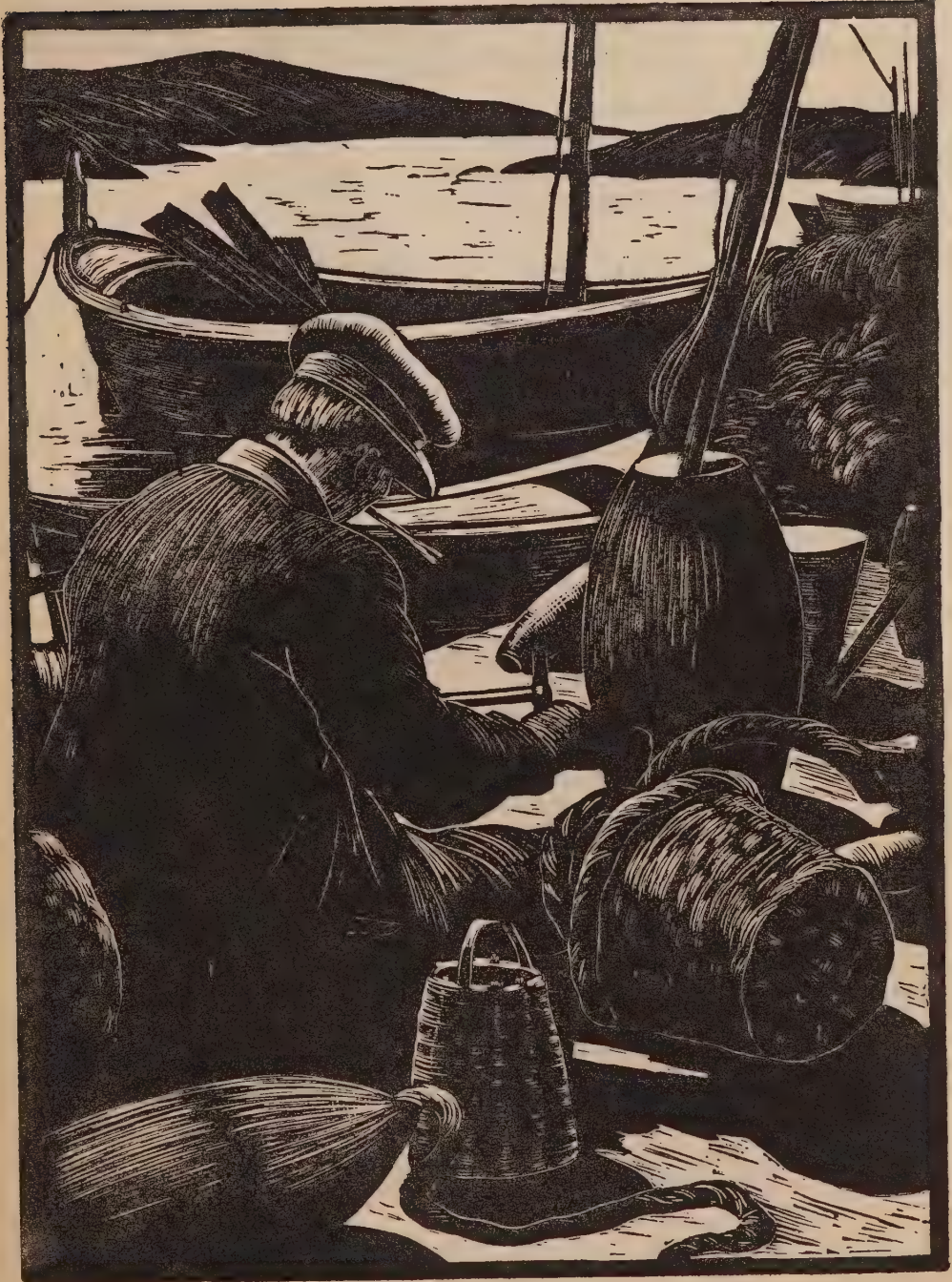
Far deeper than the world
In silence sealed and furled ;

And not for Hebe's breast
Would stint this meed of rest.

ROBERT CRAWFORD

TWO WOODCUTS

By CLARE LEIGHTON



THE NET-MENDER, TOULON



MUSSEL-GATHERERS, TOULON

THE STORY OF WAN AND THE REMARKABLE SHRUB

By ERNEST BRAMAH

I

THE story of Wan and the remarkable shrub is commendable in that it shows how, under a beneficent scheme of government, such as that of our unapproachably enlightened Empire admittedly is, impartial justice will sooner or later be accomplished. When a contrary state of things seems to prevail and the objectionable appear to triumph while the worthy are reduced to undignified expedients, it will generally be found that powerful demoniacal influences are at work or else that the retributive forces have been counterbalanced by an unfortunate conjunction of omens acting on the lives of those concerned. If neither of these causes is responsible it may be that a usurpatory and unauthorised dynasty has secured the sacred dragon throne (a not unusual occurrence in our distinguished history) and virtue is thereby for a time superseded from its function ; or, possibly, a closer scrutiny will reveal that those whom we had hitherto regarded as tending towards one extreme were not in reality such as we deemed them to be, and that the destinies meted out to them were therefore both adequate and just. Thus whatever happens it is always more prudent to assume that the integrities have been suitably maintained all round and that the inspired system initiated by the Sages ten thousand years ago continues even to-day to enshrine the highest wisdom of mankind and is yet administered by the most scrupulous body of officials in what is still the best possible among the nations of the earth.

For this reason the story of Wan and his associates, badly told and commonplace as it must inevitably sound when narrated by this incompetent person, is appropriate for the mental nourishment of the young and impressionable, while even the ill-intentioned and austere may be discreetly influenced along a desired path by its opportune recital at convenient intervals.

At a period so remote that it would be impious to doubt whatever happened then, a venerable and prosperous philosopher, Ah-shoo by name, dwelt at the foot of a mountain in a distant province. His outward life was simple but reserved, and although he spent large sums of money on fireworks and other forms of charity he often professed his indifference to wealth and position. Yet it must not be assumed that Ah-shoo was unmindful of the essentials, for upon its being courteously pointed out to him, by a well-disposed neighbour who had many daughters of his own, that in failing to provide a reliable posterity he was incurring a grave risk of starvation in the Upper World, he expressed a seemly regret for the oversight, and at once arranged to marry an elderly person who chanced at the

time to be returning his purified wearing apparel. It was to this incident that the one with whom this related story is chiefly concerned owed his existence, and when the philosopher's attention was diverted to the occurrence he bestowed on him the name of Wan, thereby indicating that he was born towards the evening of his begetter's life and also conveying the implication that the achievement was one that could scarcely be expected to be repeated. On this point he was undoubtedly inspired.

When Wan reached the age of manhood the philosopher abruptly Passed Above without any interval of preparation. It had been his custom to engage Wan in philosophical discussion at the close of each day, and on this occasion he was contrasting the system of Ka-ping, who maintained that the world was suspended from a powerful fibrous rope, with that of Chi-u, who contended that it was supported upon a substantial bamboo pole. With the clear insight of an original and discerning mind Ah-shoo had already detected the fundamental weakness of both theories.

"If the earth was indeed dependent on the flexible retention of an unstable cord, it is inevitable that during the season of Much Wind it must from time to time have been blown into a reversed position, with the distressing result that what was the East when we composed ourselves to sleep would be the West when we awoke from our slumber, to the confusion of all ordinary process of observation and the well-grounded annoyance of those who, being engaged upon a journey, found themselves compelled to return and set out again in the opposite direction. As there exists no tradition of this having ever happened, it is certain that the ingenious Ka-ping did not walk in step with the verities."

"Then the system of the profound Chi-u is the one to be regarded?" enquired Wan respectfully.

"Because Hi is in the wrong it does not automatically follow that Ho is necessarily right," quoted Ah-shoo, referring to the example of two celebrated astrologers who were equally involved in error. "The ill-conceived delusion of the obsolete Chi-u is no less open to logical disproof than the grotesque fallacy of the badly-informed Ka-ping. If a rigid and unyielding staff of wood upheld the world it is obvious that when the ground became dry and crumbling the upper end of the pole would enlarge the socket in which it was embedded, and the earth, thus deprived of a firm and stable basis, would oscillate with every considerable movement upon its upper side. Even more disturbing would be the outcome of a season of continuous flood, such as our agreeable land frequently enjoys, for then, owing to the soft and pliant nature of the soil, and the ever-increasing weight of the impending structure, the pole would continue to sink deeper and deeper into the mass, until at length it would protrude upon the upper side, when the earth, deprived of all support, would slide down the pole until it plunged into the impenetrable gloom of the Beneath Parts."

"Yet," suggested Wan with becoming deference, "if the point of the staff concerned should have been resourcefully embedded in a formidable block of stone—?"

"The system of the self-opinionated Chi-u contains no reference to any such block of stone," replied Ah-shoo coldly, for it was not wholly agreeable to his sense of the harmonies that the one who was his son should seek to supply Chi-u's deficiency. "Furthermore, the difficulty of hewing out the necessary incision for the head of the pole to fit into, in view of the hardness of the rock and the inverted position in which the workers must necessarily toil, would be insuperable. Consider well another time, O Wan, before you intervene. 'None but a nightingale should part his lips merely to emit sound'."

"Your indulgent censure will henceforth stimulate my powers of silence," declared the dutiful Wan in a straightforward voice. "Otherwise it would have been my inopportune purpose to learn of your undoubted omniscience what actually does support the earth."

"The enquiry is a natural one," replied Ah-shoo more genially, for it was a desire to set forth his own opinion on the subject that had led him to approach the problem, "and your instinct in referring it to me is judicious. The world is kept in its strict and inflexible position by—"

Who having found a jewel lifts his voice to proclaim the fact, thereby inviting one and all to claim a share? Rather does he put an unassuming foot upon the spot and direct attention to the auspicious movements of a distant flock of birds or the like, until he can prudently stoop to secure what he has seen. Certainly the analogy may not be exact at all its angles, but in any case Ah-shoo would have been well advised to speak with lowered voice. It is to be inferred that the philosopher did not make a paper boast when he spoke of possessing the fundamental secret of the earth's stability but that the High Powers were unwilling, at that early stage of our civilisation, for the device to become generally understood. Ah-shoo was therefore fated to suffer for his indiscretion and this took the form of a general stagnation of the attributes so that although he lingered for a further period before he Passed Above he was unable to express himself in a coherent form. Being deprived of the power of speech he remembered, when too late, that he had neglected to initiate Wan into any way of applying his philosophical system to a remunerative end, while it so happened that his store of wealth was unusually low owing to an imprudently generous contribution to a scheme for permanently driving evil beings out of the neighbourhood by a series of continuous explosions.

It is no longer necessary to conceal the fact that throughout his life Ah-shoo had in reality played a somewhat two-faced part. In addition to being a profound philosopher and a polite observer of the forms he was, in secret, an experienced magician and in that capacity he was able to transmute base matter into gold. For this purpose he kept a variety of coloured fluids in a shuttered recess of the wall, under a strict injunction. Having now a natural craving to assure Wan's future comfort he endeavoured by a gesture to indicate this source of affluence, confident that the one in question would not fail to grasp the significance of anything brought to his notice at so precise a moment, and thus be led to test the properties

of the liquids and in the end to discover their potency. Unfortunately, Ah-shoo's vigour was by this time unequal to the required strain and his inefficient hand could not raise itself higher than to point towards an inscribed tablet suspended at a lower level upon the wall. This chancing to be a delineation of The Virtues, warning the young against the pursuit of wealth, against trafficking with doubtful Forces, and so forth, Wan readily accepted the gesture as a final encouragement towards integrity on the part of an affectionate and pure-minded father, and dutifully prostrating himself he specifically undertook to avoid the enticements described. It was in vain that the distracted Ah-shoo endeavoured to remove this impression and to indicate his meaning more exactly. His feeble limb was incapable of a more highly-sustained effort, and the more desperately he strove to point the more persistently Wan kowtowed acquiescently and bound himself by an ever-increasing array of oaths and penalties to shun the snare of riches and to avoid all connection with the forbidden. Finally, this inability to make himself understood engendered a fatal acidity within the magician's throat, so that, with an expression of scarcely veiled contempt on his usually benevolent features, he rolled from side to side several times in despair and then passed out into the Upper Region.

It was not long before Wan began to experience an uncomfortable deficiency of taels. The more ordinary places of concealment were already familiar to his investigating thumb, but even the most detailed search failed to disclose Ah-shoo's expected hoard. When at length very little of the structural portion of the house remained intact Wan was reluctantly compelled to admit that no such store existed.

"It is certainly somewhat inconsiderate of the one to whom my very presence here is due, to have inculcated in me a contempt for riches and a fixed regard for The Virtues, and then to have Passed Away without making any adequate provision for maintaining the position," remarked Wan to the sharer of his inner chamber, as he abandoned his search as hopeless. "Tastes such as these are by no means easy to support."

"Perchance," suggested Lan-yen, the one referred to, helpfully, "it was part of an ordered scheme, thereby to inspire a confidence in your own exertions."

"The confidence inspired by the possession of a well-filled vault of silver will last an ordinary person a life-time," replied Wan, with an entire absence of enthusiasm. "Further, the philosophical outfit, which so capably enables one to despise riches in the midst of affluence, seems to have overlooked any system of procuring them when destitution threatens."

"Yet are there not other methods of enrichment?" persisted the well-meaning but not altogether gracefully animated one in question.

"Undoubtedly," replied Wan, with a self-descriptive smile, "the processes are many and diffuse. There are, to example them, those who remove uncongenial teeth for the afflicted; others who advance the opposing claims of the litigiously-inclined; and forecasters of the future. But in order to succeed in these various enterprises it is desirable to be able to

extract an indicated fang, to entice the confidence of the disputatious, or to be able to make what has been predicted bear some recognisable semblance to what has come to pass. Then there are merchants in gems and precious stones, builders of palaces, and robbers in the Ways, but here again it is first advantageous to possess the costly traffic of a merchant's stall, to have some experience in erecting palaces, or to be able to divest wayfarers of their store in the face of their sustained resistance. Still endeavouring to extract the priceless honey from the garden of your inspired suggestion there are those who collect the refuse of the public streets, but in order to be received into the band it is necessary to have been born one of the Hereditary Confederacy of Superfluity Removers and Abandoned Oddment Gatherers. . . . Aspire to wisdom, O peerless one, but in the meanwhile emulate the pattern of the ruminative ox. This person will now proceed to frequent the society of those best acquainted with the less guarded moments of the revered ascended and endeavour to learn perchance something more of his inner business methods."

With this resolve Wan sought out a body of successful merchants and the like whose custom it was to meet together beneath the Sign of Harmonious Ease, where they chiefly spoke in two breaths alternatively of their wealth and their poverty, and there strove to attach himself to the more leisurely-inclined. In this he experienced no difficulty, it being for the most part their continual despair that none would give heed to their well-displayed views on things in general, but when he spoke of the one for whom he dressed in white, and endeavoured to ascertain by what means he had earned his facile wealth, even the most sympathetic held out no encouraging hope.

"The same problem has occasioned this person many sleepless nights," admitted the one on whose testimony Wan had placed the most reliance. "In a spirit of disinterested friendship he strove by every possible expedient that a fertile and necessity-driven imagination could devise, to inveigle your venerated sire into a disclosure of the facts, but to the end he maintained a deluded and narrow-minded silence. The opinion of some here was that he secretly controlled a band of river pirates; others held that he associated with ghouls who despoiled the hidden treasure of the earth. My own opinion was that he had stumbled upon some discreditable fact connected with the past life of one now high in power. Properly developed, any of these three lines of suggestion should lead you to an honourable competence, but if the one whose foresight we are discussing has neglected to provide you with the essential clue before he Journeyed Hence the line you incautiously chose might leave you suspended in quite another position. Your obvious policy would therefore tend towards neglecting to sacrifice for him the commodities of which he must now stand most in need. Under this humane pressure his distinguished pre-occupation may perhaps be brought to an enlightened end and in the form of a dream or through the medium of an opportune vision he may find a means to remedy his omission."

"It is easy to close a door that none is holding open," replied Wan freely, for the period had already come when it was difficult for him to provide for the maintenance of his own requirements, "and the course that you suggest is like Ho Chow's selection in the analogy that bears his name."

"It is always a privilege to be able to counsel the young and inexperienced," observed the other, rising and shaking hands with himself benevolently as the beating of a gong announced that the evening rice was laid out somewhere near. "Do not hesitate to bend your enquiring footsteps in the direction of my receptive ear whenever you stand in need of intellectual sustenance. In the meanwhile, may your capacious waistcloth always be distended to repletion."

"May the pearls of wisdom continue to germinate in the nutritious soil of your well-watered brain," replied Wan no less appropriately, as he set out on a homeward path.

II

There can be little doubt that the Mandarin Hin Ching was an official of the most offensive type: rich, powerful, and in every way successful at this period of his career. Nevertheless, it is truly written, "Destroy the root and the branches wither of their own accord," and it will go hard with this obscure person's power of relating history, if, towards the close, Hin Ching shall not be brought to a plight that will be both sharp and ignominious.

Among the other degraded attributes of the concave Hin Ching was a disposition to direct his acquisitive glances towards objects with which he could have no legitimate concern, and in this way it had become a custom for him to loiter, on a variety of unworthy pretexts, in the region of Wan's not specially attractive home at such hours as those when Lan-yen might reasonably be encountered there alone. For her part, the one in question dutifully endeavoured to create the impression that she was unaware of his repulsively-expressed admiration, and even of his presence, but owing to his obtuse persistence there were occasions when to have done this consistently would have become inept. Thus and thus Wan had more than once discovered him, but with his usual ill-conditioned guile Hin Ching had never yet failed to have his feet arranged in an appropriate position when they encountered.

On his return from the abode of Harmonious Ease, where the outcome of his quest has already been so insipidly described, Wan presently became aware that the chair of a person of some consequence lurked in the shadow of his decrepit door, the bearers, after the manner of their supine tribe, having composed themselves to sleep. Wan was thereby given the opportunity to enter unperceived, which he did in an attitude of introspective reverie, this enabling him to linger abstractedly for an appreciable moment at the curtain of the ceremonial hall before he disclosed his presence. In this speculative poise he was able to listen, without any loss of internal face, to the exact terms of the deplorable Hin Ching's obscene allurement,

and, slightly later, to Lan-yen's virtuous and dignified rejoinder. Rightly assuming that there would be no further arisement likely to outweigh the disadvantages of being detected there, Wan then stepped forth.

"O perverse and double-dealing mandarin!" he exclaimed reproachfully; "is this the way that justice is displayed about the limits of the Ia-ling mountains? Or how shall the shepherd that assails the flock by night control his voice to sentence those who ravage it by day?"

"It is well to be reminded of my exalted office," replied Hin Ching, recovering his composure and arrogantly displaying the insignia of his rank. "Knees such as yours were made to bend, presumptuous Wan, and the rebellious head that has grown too tall to do obeisance can be shortened," and he indicated by a gesture that the other should prostrate himself.

"When the profound Ng-tai made the remark, 'Beneath an integritous roof all men are equal,' he was entertaining an imitator of official seals, three sorcerers, and a celebrated viceroy. Why then should this person depart from the high principle in favour of one merely of the crystal button?"

"Four powerful reasons may be brought to bear upon the argument," replied Hin Ching, and he moved towards the door to summon his attendants.

"They do not apply to the case as I present it," retorted Wan, drawing his self-reliant sword and intervening its persuasive edge between the other and his purpose. "Let us confine the issue to essential points, O crafty mandarin."

At this determined mien Hin Ching lost the usual appearance of his face somewhat, though he made a misbegotten attempt to gather reassurance by grinding his ill-arranged teeth aggressively. As Wan still persisted in an unshaken front, however, the half-stomached person facing him very soon began to retire behind himself and to raise a barrier of evasive subterfuge—first by the claim that as the undoubted thickness of his body afforded a double target he should be permitted to return two blows for each one aimed against him, and later with a demand that he should be allowed to stand upon a dais during the encounter by virtue of his high position. Whatever might have been the issue of his strategy the conflict was definitely averted by a melodious wail of anguish from Lan-yen as she suddenly composed herself into a gracefully-displayed rigidity at the impending scene of bloodshed. In the ensuement the detestable Hin Ching imperceptibly faded out, the last indication of his contaminating presence being the apophthegm that there were more ways of killing a dragon than that of holding its head under water.

As the time went on the deeper meaning of the contemptible Hin Ching's sinister remark gradually came up to the surface. Those who in the past had not scrupled to associate with Wan now began to alienate themselves from his society, and when closely pressed spoke from behind well-guarded lips of circumspection and the submission to authority that the necessities

of an increased posterity entailed. Others raised a lukewarm finger as he passed where before there had been two insistent outstretched hands, and everywhere there was a disposition to remember neglected tasks on his approach.

In other and more sombre shapes the inauspicious shadow of this corrupt official darkened Wan's blameless path. Merchants with whom he had been wont to traffic on the general understanding that he would requite them in a more propitious hour now disclosed a concentration of adverse circumstances that obliged them to withhold their store, so that gradually the bare necessities of the least elaborate life ceased to be within his reach. From time to time heavy rocks, moved by no apparent cause, precipitated themselves around his footsteps, hitherto reliant bridges burst asunder at the exact moment when he might be expected to be crossing them, and the immutable laws governing the recurrence of a stated hazard seemed for a time to be suspended from their function. "The egregious Hin Ching certainly does not intend to eat his words," remarked Wan impassively as a triumphant arch which lay beyond his gate crumbled for the fourth time as he passed through.

III

Who has not proved the justice of the saying, "She who breaks the lid by noon will crack the dish before nightfall"? Wan was already suffering from the inadequacy of a misguided father, the depravity of an unscrupulous official and the flaccidity of a weak-kneed band of neighbours. To these must now be added a cessation of the ordinary source of nature and the intervention of the correcting gods. Under their avenging rule a prolonged drought assailed the land, so that where fruitfulness and verdure had hitherto prevailed there was soon nothing to be found but barrenness and dust. Wan and Lan-yen began to look into each other's eyes with a benumbing dread, and each in turn secretly replaced among their common store something from the allotted portion and strove unseen to dull the natural pangs of hunger by countless unstable wiles. The meagre strip of cultivated land they held, perforce their sole support, was ill-equipped against the universal famine, and it was with halting feet and downcast face that Wan returned each day to display his slender gain. "A few parched fruit I bring," it might be, or, "This cup of earth-nuts must suffice," perchance. Soon, "Naught remains now but bitter-tasting herbs," he was compelled to say, and Lan-yen waited for the time when there would come the presage of their fate, "There now is nothing more."

In the most distant corner of the garden there stood two shrubs of a kind then unfamiliar to the land, not tall but very sturdy in their growth. Once when they walked together in that part Lan-yen had drawn Wan aside, and being of a thrifty and sententious mind, had pointed to them, saying :

"Here are two shrubs which neither bear fruit nor serve a useful purpose in some other way. Put out your hand, proficient one, and hew

them down so that their wood may feed our scanty hearth and a more profitable herbage occupy their place."

At this request Wan changed countenance, and although he cleared his throat repeatedly, it was some time before he could frame a suitable reply.

"There is a tradition connected with this spot," he said at length, "which would make it extremely ill-advised to do as you suggest."

"How then does it chance that the story has never yet reached my all-embracing ears?" inquired Lan-yen in some confusion. "What mystery is here?"

"That," replied Wan tactfully, "is because your conversation is mainly with the ephemeral and slight. The legend was received from the lips of the most venerable dweller in this community, who had in turn acquired it from the mental storehouse of his predecessor."

"The words of a patriarch, though generally diffuse and sometimes incoherent, are worthy of regard," admitted Lan-yen gracefully. "Proceed to unfold your reminiscent mood."

"Upon this spot in bygone years there lived a pious anchorite who sought to attain perfection by repeating the names of the Pure Ones an increasing number of times each day. Devoting himself wholly to this sacred undertaking, and being by nature generously equipped towards the task, he at length formed the meritorious project of continuing without intermission either by night or day, and, in this tenacious way outstripping all rival and competing anchorites, of being received finally into a higher state of total obliteration in the Ultimate Beyond than any recluse had hitherto attained. Every part of his being responded to the exalted call made on it, save only one, but in each case, just as the permanent achievement lay within his grasp, his rebellious eyelids fell from the high standard of perfection and betrayed him into sleep. All ordinary methods of correction having failed, the conscientious solitary took a knife of distinguished sharpness and resolutely slicing off the effete members of his house he cast them from him out into the night. The watchful Powers approved, and to mark the sacrifice a tree sprang up where each lid fell, and by the contour of its leaf proclaimed the symbol of its origin."

This incident occurred to Lan-yen's mind when their extremity had passed all normal bounds and every kind of cultivated food had ceased. The time had now come when Wan returned an empty bowl into her waiting hands, and with mute gestures and uncertain steps had sought to go, rather than speak the message of despair. It was then that Lan-yen detained him by her gentle voice to urge a last resort.

"There still remain the two mysterious trees, whose rich and glossy leaves suggest a certain juicy nourishment. Should they happen to prove deadly in effect then our end will only be more sharply-ruled than would otherwise be the case; if, on the contrary, they are of innocuous growth they may sustain us until some other form of succour intervenes."

"If you are willing to embark on so doubtful an adventure it would

cover me with secret humiliation to refrain," replied Wan acquiescently. "Give me the bowl again."

When she heard his returning step Lan-yen went out to meet him, and seeing his downcast look she hailed him from a distance.

"Do not despond!" she cried. "The sting of a whip indicates its end and your menial one is inspired to prophesy a very illustrious close to all our trials. Further, she has procured the flavour of an orange and a sprinkling of snuff wherewith to spice the dish."

"In that case," replied Wan, displaying what he had brought, "the savouring will truly be the essence of our feast. The produce of the shrubs has at length shared the common fate," and he made to throw away the dry and withered leaves that the bowl contained.

"Forbear!" exclaimed Lan-yen, restraining him. "'It is no further on than back again when the half-way house is reached.' Who knows what hidden virtues may diffuse from so miraculous a root?"

In this agreeable spirit the accommodating person took up the task, and with such patient skill as if a banquet of ceremonial swallows had been involved, she prepared a dish of the withered leaves from the unknown shrubs. When all was ready she set the alien fare before Wan and took her place beside the chair to serve his hand.

"Eat," she exhorted, "and may the Compassionate Ones protect you."

"I lean against their sympathetic understanding," responded Wan devoutly, as he looked beneath the cover. "Nevertheless," he added graciously, "on so momentous an occasion priority shall be yours."

"By no means," replied Lan-yen hastily, at the same time pressing him back into the seat he would vacate. "Not until you have slaked your noble appetite shall my second-rate lips partake."

"It is proverbial that from a hungry tiger and an affectionate woman there is no escape," murmured Wan, and taking up a portion of the food he swallowed it.

"Your usually expressive eye has assumed a sudden glassy lustre," exclaimed Lan-yen, who had not ceased to regard him anxiously. "What is the outstanding flavour of the dish?"

"It has no discoverable flavour of any kind," declared Wan, speaking with considerable emotion, "but the general effect it produces is undistinguishable from suffocation. A cup of water, adored, before it is too late!"

"Alas," admitted Lan-yen, looking round in a high-minded access of refined dismay, "none now remains! There is nothing here but the dark and austere liquor in which the herb has boiled."

"So long as it is liquid it suffices," replied Wan in an extremity, and seizing the proffered vessel from her misgiving hand, he took a well-sustained grasp of its contents.

"The remedy would appear to be a protracted one," remarked Lan-yen in some surprise, as Wan maintained the steady rhythm of his action. "Surely the obstruction is by now dispersed?"

"Phoenix-eyed one," replied Wan, pausing with some reluctance; "not only is that obstruction now removed, but every other impediment to felicity is likewise brushed away. Observe this person's sudden rise of vigour, his unexpected store of energy, the almost alarming air of general proficiency radiating from his system. It becomes plain now that from the beginning of our oppression everything has been working in an ordered scheme to lead us to an end. This is no earthly liquid, such as you might brew, but a special nectar sent down by the gods to sustain mankind in every sort of trial. From this moment our future prosperity is assured."

As he finished speaking there was a sudden outcry from the Way beyond, a blending of heavy steps and upraised voices, the door was thrust widely open, and with a deplorable absence of seemingly ostentation, the sublime Emperor of the land, accompanied by a retinue of agitated nobles, pressed into the room.

IV

Let it be freely admitted that a really capable narrator of events would have led up to this badly-arranged crisis more judiciously, and in a manner less likely to distress the harmonious balance of his hearers' feelings. Yet there is a certain fitness in the stress, however ineptly reached, for the august sovereign now involved was so rapidly-outlined in all his movements that between his conception of a course and the moment when he embarked upon it there was very little opportunity for those chiefly concerned to engage in preparation. Thus steps into the record Ming Wang, last of his royal line.

When the famine had cankered the land for seven full moons there appeared before the Palace gate a stranger clad in fur. Without deigning to reply to any man of those confronting him with words of this or that he loftily took down the brazen trident from among the instruments that hung there and struck on it a loud compelling note with the fingers of his open hand. At this defiant challenge, in compliance with the Ancient Usage, he was led into the presence of Ming Wang at once.

"Speak without fear," said the sympathetic ruler affably, "for the iron law of Yu protects you."

At the mention of this heroic name the stranger's expression varied in its tenor, and he drew up the covering of his face a little, although the day was warm.

"In the north and the south, on the east and the west, there is a famine in the land, for the resentful gods withhold their natural moisture," he proclaimed; and it was afterwards agreed that the sound of his voice was like the whetting of a sickle on a marble hone. "For seven moons and seven more days has this affliction been, and you who stand regently between the Upper and the Lower Worlds have suffered it to be."

"What you say is very surprising," replied Ming Wang, "and the more so as no appreciable scarcity has been apparent at our royal table for the time you name. Be assured the due enquiry shall be made, however."

"Let it be made forthwith and justice measured out," said the intruder sternly, and he turned away and stood so that none might see the working of his complicated thoughts.

"When two minds are agreed what matter which tongue speaks?" remarked the liberally-endowed monarch to the scandalised officials hovering round, and with truly imperial large-handedness he ordered the immediate presence of the four chancellors of the regions named, despite the fact that they were then residing in their several distant capitals. No stronger proof of the efficiency of Ming Wang's vigorous rule need be sought, for no sooner was the command issued than the four chancellors immediately appeared.

"It is obligingly reported by an unnamed well-wisher that a scarcity exists in all the corners of our boundless realm," remarked the Illimitable, in so encouraging a voice that the four chancellors began to beat their heads upon the granite floor in an access of misgiving. "Doubtless each has a wholly adequate reply?"

"Omnipotence," pleaded the first, "there has been a slight temporary derangement of transport in the Province of the North, with the unfortunate arisement that here and there a luxury is scarce."

"All-seeing," replied the next, "certain grain in a restricted area of the Province of the South has been consumed by subterranean Beings. Yet what are southern men that they should not turn from rice to millet with a cheerful face?"

"In the Province of the East, Benevolence," declared the third, "a fiery omen shot across the sky, corroding the earth to barrenness that lay within its sphere. To judgments such as this the faithful can but bend an acquiescent neck."

"Father of all mercies," stammered the last, who, being slow-witted, had no palliation ready to his tongue, "that same blazing menace then passed onward to the Province of the West where it wrought a like disaster."

"Nothing could be more convincing," agreed the Mouthpiece of Wisdom heartily. "We were sure that something of the sort would be at once forthcoming. It will certainly be a fountain of consolation to your sorrowing friends, even in the most poignant moments of their grief, that your crime—despite its regrettable consequences—was purely of a technical description."

"High Majesty?" besought the four in harmony.

"It would appear," explained the Supreme indulgently, "that by withholding all mention of this distressing state of things (doubtless to spare our too warm-hearted ears) you have each inadvertently come within the Code of Yaou and Shun, under the Section: 'Conduct in an official whereby disaffection in the Outer Lands may be provoked.' In that imperishable Statute every phase of misdoing is crystallised with unfailing legal skill into this shining principle of universal justice: one crime, one responsible official. That firmly grasped, the administration of an otherwise

complex judicial system becomes purely a matter of elementary mathematics. In this case, as there are clearly four crimes to be atoned, four responsible officials suffer the usual fatal expiation."

"Enough," exclaimed the stranger, emerging from his reverie and confronting Ming Wang again. "In that respect, no doubt, a fit example will be made. But what of the greater need besetting you, or who will persuade the seasons to resume their normal course?"

"As to that," replied the Emperor agreeably, "we are waiting to tread in your illuminating footsteps in whatever direction you may indicate."

"He who brings the word is not thereby required to go the way," replied the one who thus described himself. "You, Younger Brother, hold the Line of the Immortal Eight. See to it that you do not fail their now expectant eyes."

"It is one thing to hold the line: it is quite another to obtain a message from the farther end," murmured the Sublime rebelliously, but when he would have again applied for more explicit guidance it was discovered that the stranger had withdrawn though none had marked the moment of his going.

"All-knowing," urged a faithful slave who bore the Emperor's cup, "if you seek enlightenment, wherefore are The Books?"

"It is well said," exclaimed the Monarch, casting off his gloom. "What more in keeping with the theme than that a vassal youth should recall what the trusted keepers of our Inner Council have forgot?"

"Revered," returned the spokesman of the Elder Branch, by no means disposed to have their prescience questioned thus, "if we who guard the dark secrets of The Books forbore, it was not that our minds were tardy in your need, but rather because our passionate devotion shrank from the thought of finding what we may."

The Divine made a gesture of reconciliation.

"Your loyalty is clear and deep, Tso Paik, nor has its source yet been reached," he admitted freely. "But what does the somewhat heavily-scored music of your genial voice forecast?"

"That is as will presently appear," replied the other sombrely, "for since the day of your great progenitor Shan-ti (who chose self-ending in consequence of what he learned) the restraining cords have not been cut nor the wisdom of The Books displayed."

"Certainly there are strong arguments against doing anything of the sort in an idle spirit," admitted Ming Wang hastily, at the same time spilling the larger portion of his wine upon the kneeling cup-bearer. "Perhaps after all—"

"The requirement has gone forth: the issue must be met," pronounced the custodian firmly. "Even the lower-class demons have their feelings in such matters." Then raising his voice, as his especial office permitted him to do, he called for the attendance of all his satellites and for the bringing of The Books. At this unusual cry general business of every sort was immediately suspended within the limits of the Palace walls, and

an interminable stream of augurs, sorcerers, diviners, astrologers, forecasters, necromancers, haruspices, magicians, incantators, soothsayers, charm-workers, illusionists, singers and dancers, thought-readers, contortionists, and the like rallied to his side, bringing with them birds, serpents, fruit, ashes, flat and rounded sticks, cords, fire, entrails, perfumed wax, salt, coloured earth, dung of the sacred apes, crystal spheres and the other necessary utensils of their enlightened arts. So great was the press that very few ordinary persons gained admittance, and of these only the outspoken and robust. When order was restored the splendid ceremony of Bringing in The Books was formally observed, the casket opened, and the cords released.

"Ming Wang," pronounced the one who had made himself conspicuous throughout, "this is the Wisdom of The Books and thus stands the passage on the bamboo slip to which my necessarily-inspired finger has been led: 'Drought, excessive, to assuage. Should a pestilential drought continue unappeased, a palatable extract may be made of the fermented grain of rice—'"

"Tso Paik," muttered another of the Inner Council, from about his sleeve, "what the Evil Dragon has assailed your mental balance?"

"Imperishable," pleaded Tso Paik, in servile confusion, "dazzled by the brilliance of your shining condescension, this illiterate person misread the initial sign and diverged to an inappropriate line. Yet his arresting finger was not deceived, for the jewelled passage that relates appears on the next slip."

"Continue, discriminating Tso Paik," said the Emperor pleasantly. "Nor suffer your finger yet to lose that self-same place."

"Sublimity, the guidance sought is that entitled: 'Drought, caused by Good or Bad Spirits, to disperse,'" resumed Tso Paik in a less compelling voice. "Thus and thus the message is pronounced: 'He who stands between the Upper and the Lower Planes alone can intervene when the Immortals have so far declared their wrath'—there follows much of a circumlocutory nature connected with the Inherent Principle of Equipoise, and so forth."

"That can fittingly be reserved for our leisurely delectation at some future date," put in the Highest. "Insert your chop-stick in the solid meat, Tso Paik. What have we got to *do*?"

"Putting aside these gems of philosophical profundity, Benign, the nature of your submission is neither palatable nor light." At these foreboding words a thrill of apprehension swayed the vast concourse, but it was widely noticed that the crude Tso Paik's lamentable voice took upon itself a pleasurable shade. "Decked to the likeness of a sacrificial ox, shorn both of hair and rank-denoting nails and riding in a farm-yard cart, it is your unpleasant lot to be taken to the highest point of the sacred Ia-ling range and there confess your sins to heaven and undertake reform. When this humane sacrifice has been achieved (providing no untoward omen intervenes meanwhile) the healing rain will fall."

At the full understanding of this direful penance an awestruck silence fell upon the throng. The first to break it was the captain of the Emperor's chosen guard, and although he was incapable of producing more than an attenuated whisper, his words expressed the thoughts of every loyal subject there.

"Sins ! Who speaks of sins ?" he murmured in amaze. "How can that which is not, be ? The Ever-righteous *has* no sins !"

Never was the profundity of the All-grasping more lucidly displayed than in that exacting pause when, whatever else happened, a popular rising, in one direction or another, seemed inevitable.

"Peace, worthy Sung," he cried, in a voice that carried to the public square outside where it was rapturously acclaimed, although at that distance it was, of course, impossible to distinguish a word he said ; "restrain your generous zeal and whet your docile ears to an acuter edge. The obligation is to *confess* sins : not to *possess* them. Admittedly we have no sins, for, little as the censorious credit it, your Unapproachable is often denied what the meanest outcast in his realm can wallow in. Nothing that we may do is, or can be, wrong ; but the welfare of the people is our chief concern, and to secure that end there is no catalogue of vice that we shall not cheerfully subscribe to."

So unutterable was the effect produced by this truly regal magnanimity that all who heard its terms were rendered speechless. Those outside, on the contrary, hastily assuming that Ming Wang had said all that he intended testified their satisfaction more joyfully than before, and loud cries of "A thousand years !" filled the air.

"In the detail of promising amendment, also, there is nothing to which the most arbitrary need take exception," continued the enlightened Monarch, when his voice could once more be heard. "What, after all, is a promise of amendment but an affirmation that the one who makes it will be more worthy of homage to-morrow than to-day ? There is nothing new about that in your Immaculate's career ; every day finds him better than before."

"Your words are like a string of hanging lanterns, where the way has hitherto been dark," fervently declared an aged counsellor. "But, Pre-eminence, your polished nails, your cultivated hair— !"

"It is better to lose two spans outwards than one span inwards," replied the practical-minded Sovereign, dropping his voice for that one's ear alone. "Yet," he continued, turning to Tso Piak again, "in one respect the limit of compliance has been reached, and he who opens a hand so freely on the right may close one as tightly on the left. 'The likeness of an ox,' is doubtless a picturesque analogy, and the similitude is not bereft of a certain massive dignity. But if at the extremity of your prolific mind, Tso Paik, you cherish the questionable ambition of displaying your confiding Ruler to a superstitious though by no means simple-minded populace, wearing horns—"

"Mirror of felicity!" protested Tso Paik, as one who is maligned; "if my crude tongue offends, let it cease. You wear a sword and my head has but a single neck."

"In our romantic land there should be room both for your tongue and my sword to move without any overlapping," reassured Ming Wang. "Proceed, in your sublime office, therefore, to the exactitude of detail and let harmony prevail."

V

Thus in the third year of his short but glorious reign the well-disposed Ming Wang set out to free his people from the evil that oppressed them, draped in the semblance of a sacrificial ox (the metaphor, it was found, did not demand more than a screen of rushes to enclose his lower half), shorn, and riding in a dung-cart through the land. With so liberal-minded a prince, in so ambiguous a guise, it was impossible that the journey should be devoid of incident, but this is the essential story of Wan and he who, while gathering mast, suffers his mind to dwell on the thought of peaches will return with an empty sack.

In due course the company reached the lower slopes of the Ia-ling mountains, and thenceforward all progress was on foot. Tso Paik, who was gross by nature and very sluggish on his feet, would willingly have remained below to offer up (he said) an invocation to the gods, but Ming Wang would not suffer this, claiming that if he did their sense might become satiate before his own chance came. Being of a slight and strenuous cast this mode of progress was more congenial to the Emperor's taste than the restricted freedom of the dung-cart, and from time to time he inspired his train by pointing out to them that what they deemed to be the highest point was an imposition of the eye, and that yet another peak lay beyond. Finally, Tso Paik rolled bodily upon the ground and declared that, as he could go no farther, where he lay in his official rank as Chief Custodian of The Books must constitute the limit, and this was then agreed to.

No complete record of Ming Wang's confession now exists, all those who accompanied him having entered into a deep compact to preserve a stubborn silence. It is admitted, however, that it was of inordinate length, very explicit in its details, and that it implicated practically every courtier and official of any standing. In a final access of self-reproach the Emperor penitently admitted that he was the guilty head of a thoroughly decayed and criminal autocracy, that he weakly surrounded himself with greedy and incompetent officials, and that he had thoughtlessly permitted sycophantry, bribery and speculation to abound.

Almost before he had begun to speak heavy clouds were seen to drift up from the west; with the first words of definite submission a few drops fell, and the ceremony was concluded in a steady downpour. The conscientious Monarch did not allow the undoubted discomfort of all concerned to stem the flow of his inspired penitence, but when the last atrocity that he could lay to his own and, even more pointedly, to his ministers' charge had been revealed he called upon Tso Paik.

"You, Tso Paik, as Ceremonial Director of the Enterprise, have accomplished an end. Yet, no longer to maintain a poise, does not the copious promptness of the response astonish even you?"

"Omnipotence," replied Tso Paik, looking steadily before him, "my faith was like an elephant tethered to a rock."

"It is well," agreed the Greatest, endeavouring to shake his scanty outer garment free of moisture. "Bring forward now our largest state umbrella."

At this sudden but in no way unreasonable command a very concentrated silence engaged the company, and those who had not the opportunity to withdraw in unstudied abstraction sought to anticipate any call upon themselves by regarding the one involved expectantly.

"Alas," confessed the dense Tso Paik, "it had not occurred to this one's bankrupt mind that there would be any likelihood—" but at that point, understanding the snare to which he had enticed himself, he stopped ineptly.

A passing shiver disturbed the royal frame, though with high-born delicacy he endeavoured to conceal it. Only a faint elevation of the celestial eyebrows betrayed the generous emotion at the painful obligation laid upon him.

"It wrings my tenderest parts with hooks of bitterness," he said, "that so loyal and trustworthy a subject should have brought himself within the Code of Yaou and Shun, under the Section: 'Conduct in an official whereby the well-being of his Sovereign is directly or indirectly menaced.' Li Tung, you are a dignitary of high justice; receive the unfortunate Tso Paik into your charge until the Palace executioner shall require him at your hands. Let us now strive to avert, so far as we can, the ill consequences of this fatal indiscretion by seeking the nearest shelter."

VI

In this remarkable manner two of the most notable characters of any age, Wan the son of Ah-shoo, and Ming Wang (to whose memory posterity has dedicated as a title "The Knowing") at last encountered, for it was to the penurious home of the former person that destiny inclined the Emperor's footsteps. Recognising the languished fortunes of the one whose roof he sought, the considerate Monarch forbore to stand on ceremony, merely requiring a reclining stool before the charcoal fire.

"Beneficence," exclaimed Wan, falling on his face to the best of his ability as he offered a steaming cup, "admittedly the hearth will warm the muscles of your lordly body, but here is that which will invigorate the cockles of your noble heart."

For a perceptible moment the Imperishable wavered—certainly the balance of the analogy might have been more classically maintained, or possibly he remembered the long succession of food-tasters who had fallen lifeless at his feet—but in that pause the exquisite aroma of the fragrant liquid assailed his auspicious nose. He took the cup and emptied it,

returned it to Wan's hand with an appropriate gesture, and continued thus and thus until the latter person had to confess that his store was destitute. Not until then did Ming Wang devote his throat to speech.

"What is this enchanted beverage?" he demanded, "and why has it been withheld from us until now?"

"It is the produce of a sacred tree, high Majesty, and its use but lately revealed to me by special favour of the Powers. Never before, from the legendary days of the First Man until this hour, has it been brewed on earth, and, save for the necessary tests, your own distinguished lips are the first to taste it."

"It is certainly miraculous," agreed Ming Wang ecstatically, and unable to contain himself he began to cross and recross the room, to the embarrassment of the assembled nobles who were thus also kept in a continual state of flux. "It has a perfection hitherto unknown among the liquids of the world. It cheers yet without any disconcerting effect upon the speech or movements. It warms where one is cold and cools where one is hot. Already every trace of fatigue and despondency has vanished, leaving us inspired for further deeds of public usefulness, eager to accomplish other acts of justice. It stimulates, invigorates, rejuvenates, animates, lubricates—"

"Sublime Potentate," pleaded the recorder of his voice, "retard the torrent of your melodious soliloquy! How else shall this clay-fingered menial take down your priceless words which it is his design presently to set to appropriate music?"

"It will be as acceptable at the earliest gong-stroke of the yet unawakened morn, as it will become the inevitable accompaniment to the afternoon rice. Into the inner office of the commercially-inclined it will be brought to smooth the progress of each bargain, and in the dim recesses of our departmental archives it will produce harmony and discreet mirth among the abstemious yet sprightly of both sexes. In the chambers of our lesser ones its name is destined to rank as a synonym of all that is confidential and inexact. The weary student, endeavouring to banish sleep; the minor priest, striving to maintain enthusiasm amid an inadequacy of taels; the harassed and ill-requited inscriber of the spoken word—"

"Proceed, O Tap-root of Eloquence, proceed!" murmured the one who plied a hurrying brush. "To an accompaniment of drums, horns, and metallic serpents—"

"To cope the final pinnacle, it is an entirely new thing; indeed it is *the* new thing, and unless our experience of an imitative and docile people is signally astray it will soon become 'the thing'." It is hardly necessary to insist at this late date how noticeably the prescient Ming Wang's words have been literally fulfilled. Known for many centuries as "the new thing," the popular decoction passed by a natural stage into "the thing" and then, in affectionate abbreviation, to "the." By this appropriate designation it is recognised in every land to which our flowery civilisation carries, though doubtless on barbaric tongues the melodious word is bent to many uncouth similitudes.

"It now only remains," continued the even-handed law-giver, "to reward virtue and to eradicate vice. The former is personified before us—the latter we shall doubtless very soon discover in some form or another. What, O benefactor of mankind, is your upright name?"

"My low-class appellation is Wan, that of my mentally-defective father being Ah-shoo, we springing from the lowly house of Lam," replied the other suitably. "The inconspicuous shadow lurking in the background is Lan-yen, whose name entwines with mine."

"Yet how comes it that you, who are evidently under the direct protection of the higher Forces, are in so—as it may be expressed?" and with commendable tact the humane Emperor merely indicated the threadbare walls and Wan's immemorial garb.

"Formerly, Magnificence, my state was thus and thus, lacking nothing and having slaves to stand before my presence," admitted Wan. "But of late one in authority has oppressed me for no cause, save that the proverb aptly says, 'Should you touch a rat upon the tail be assured that he will turn and bite you,' and in this latter end his malice has prevailed."

"Ah," commented the Enlightened, with a meaning nod at each of his suite in turn, to which they duly responded an apt glance of cognisance. "What is this corrupt official's name and the sign of his condition?" and the Justice-loving began to rub his hands pleasurably together.

"He is of the crystal button, lord, and his forbidding name Hin Ching. Furthermore, led on by an insatiable curiosity he is at this moment standing about this person's crumbling gate, striving to peer through the prickly hedge towards us."

"Let him be brought in at once," was the command and with no opportunity to prepare an evasive tale, Hin Ching was hurried forward.

"Hin Ching," said the Emperor, who had meanwhile taken up an appropriate station, "all your duplicity is known to us, and no defence will serve you. How comes it that you have so pursued this meritorious youth who has our royal favour?"

"Tolerance," pleaded the terror-stricken culprit, seeing no other course before him, and kowtowing so passionately that his words could scarcely be heard above the steady clashing of his head upon the sonorous floor, "be clement in your strength, for it has long been suspected that this person's heart is touched."

"In that case," decided the Sun of Impartiality, "the marks should certainly be visible so that the innocent may be warned thereby." Then, turning to his retinue, he continued: "Procure a reasonable abundance of supple bamboo rods, and without disturbing the afflicted mandarin from the position which he has so conveniently assumed, remove his lower robe."

At this awful presage of the nature of the correction shortly to be laid upon Hin Ching a shudder went up from the assembled host, and even Wan vacillated in his strict resentment.

"Brother of the peacock," he pleaded, "suffer justice this once to drowse. He is a man of middle years and obese beyond his age."

"It has ever been the privilege to the wronged to condone the guilty," replied Ming Wang, "and to that extent your plea must hold. Yet wherein shall Hin Ching's penance lie, his case being outside the Code of Yaou and Shun? What, mandarin, is your strict equivalent?"

"Your entirely humble ranks equal with a district prefect, High Excellence—equal and above."

"Henceforth you will rank equal and below, thus degrading you appreciably and at the same time enabling you to save a portion of your face. On the unbending line of pure romantic justice all your belongings should divert to Wan, but as this would probably result in your becoming a dangerous criminal the special requirements will be met by allotting to him half. To prevent any mutual delusion you will divide all you possess into two equal mounds—and Wan will make his choice."

"May your life span ten thousand ages and your grandsons rule the world!" exclaimed Wan. "It is enough to have seen this day," and even Hin Ching contributed an appropriate, though a shorter, blessing from within his teeth.

"It only remains to define your duties," continued the Ever-thoughtful, addressing himself to Wan. "Your style will be that of 'Protector of the Tree' and the scroll confirming this will follow in due season. Your chief function will, of course, be that of assuring an unfailing supply of the beverage to our royal Palaces at all times. In your spare moments you can transmit offshoots of the tree to every point of our boundless Empire, so that the seed shall never fail. The office, which will be strictly hereditary, will naturally be quite honorary, what you receive from Hin Ching being sufficient to maintain your state. It will, however, carry with it a salute of three trumpets and the emblem of a steaming cup."

"Majesty," reported an attending slave, entering at this pause, "a relay of swift horses from the Capital awaits your commanding voice without."

The All-accomplishing rose and moved towards the door with the well-satisfied smile of a person who has achieved his worthy end.

"Everything has been set right here," he remarked pleasantly, "and the usual edicts will follow within a moon." Then to his suite: "Come, let us press forward with all haste to scatter the germs of promiscuous justice elsewhere."

PANNES IN FRANCE

By FRANCES GREGG

A *PANNE* is in any one of those thousand thousand ways in which the God of sport may impede the one car of your heart from arriving at, or, as the case may be, from even starting for, the black spot on the Michelin map that is the place of dreams.

I was new to the road, when with an old grey four-seater, blooming with my progeny at every available corner, I started from the Côte D'Or for the Côte D'Argent, there to rejoin the owner of the car. "It has always," he wrote, "run very smoothly for me, and I don't see why you shouldn't get here all right. It's only about seven hundred kilometres."

Seven hundred kilometres—only!

From Dijon by Paray-le-monial to Moulins, I should have a comparatively easy route, all along the lovely Canal du Centre. Then for Gueret, over the Massif Central to Limoges, down by Périgueux, and from there to Bordeaux.

I thumb-tacked the four great maps to the biggest table in the house, and there, for one week, taking brief rests for nourishment and sleep, I sat, till there was no single twist or turn from Dijon to Bordeaux that I did not know by heart. Why, I wondered, has the magic of the map been so ignored in song and story? Was there nothing that a poet could do with National Route 89, peppered with danger spots, sprouting into green and red of picturesqueness, flinging itself from one to two to three of those ominous triangles that signify ascents?

"It does, of course," wrote the owner, "sometimes balk at the hills, but you'll soon learn to humour it. It's all perfectly simple—first, second, third, fourth vitesse to start, and debrayer, frein, to stop. Nothing could be more simple." "Yes, my darling," I wrote back, "but if, like the offspring, it neither starts nor stops when bid?"

Down through the undulating lands of the Côte D'Or we sped, past Beaune, Meursault, Buligny, Montrachet of the famous clos. Here, or hereabouts, Sterne had passed, sating his taste for the romanesque with quaint adventure by écurie doors. How solid and reliable his vehicle looked, seen thus over the span of years. The scenery could have changed very little, for these old buildings, with the graciously carved stone of the window frames, would have been hardly less old in his day; and certainly I had seen in old, old prints and drawings those wide deep flapping sunbonnets that hid at this moment the dark-eyed sombre charm of the faces of the vigneronnes of Bourgoyne. What a tantalization those bonnets must have been to Sterne, darting that quaint great-beaked visage from side to side of his *désobligeant*!

At Montrachet we stopped to taste the wine from that world-famous vine. We were served with a thin and acrid and shrivelling fluid, like a

keen, nightmarish claret. Certainly it was a sensation, for it was not often, I fancied, that these gauche beginnings of delicate wines were tasted except in the lands from which they come.

"Hein, vous ne l'aimez pas? C'est bon, c'est du bon vin! Mademoiselle is alone? Pas de Monsieur?" And from there on practically all the way across France I was given nothing but Mademoiselle, not withstanding the uproarious infants. I used often to wonder what they thought, for the refrain of "Pas de Monsieur?" echoed and re-echoed on my trail. It was interesting to note that I passed only one other woman on the road running a car, and that that was a young American.

"Mademoiselle" I could understand, for in this franker land, the cowering effect of marriage is openly stated along with other natural states. I could see that they were sure that if I had been in the thrall long enough to achieve that rear seat array, I simply couldn't have had the courage left to run a car. How then did they account for all those children? Did I wear, for them, the halo of a professional kidnapper, or was I supposed to have succumbed to a series of violent Freudian complexes?

Along the banks of the central canal we sped without mishap, wondering why Monsieur Michelin had not honoured it with his appreciative red and green stamp. Certainly no landscape could be more gently lovely. The canal winds through long vistas of the pensive, slender poplar, with no ripple to mar their long shades in its depths. Occasionally a rose-hung cottage with white walls was reflected like a garnished silver disc, itself, and yet more delicate and dream-like than a real thing could be. These things I caught in those swift flashes, like the sweeping glance of a bird, that one may only give who holds the volant. I should have liked to know did Corot pass there, sometime, when this, a limpid river, had wound its way between other such trees as these, and there had stood, upon its borders, those small sweet groups of girls and lovers?

Outside Monceau-les-Mines, by taking a wrong turning, we had our first mishap. There was a hill. As it looked to me, it went straight up, like the cloud that went before by day, and it had no top to it. Our owner had said, "Perhaps you had better go into third before you start to climb, if you feel nervous." We went him four better, and went prudently into first. That did away with the necessity of any controversy between me and it on the way up. Half-way up we stuck.

Many gathered about us. "Il y en a de l'eau? Donnez un peu de gaz. Il faut de l'air," were some of the many directions as though it had been a fainting lady.

"Junior," I appealed at last to the most hopeful of the young incumbrances, "what does daddy say when it behaves like this?"

"He says 'damn the carburetter'."

I did. Then I gingerly lifted up the hood. I was not dressed for this. Which, in that medley of oily pipes and springs, was the "carburetter"? I pulled a plug that should have spouted gasoline and didn't, and yet gasoline there was, a good fifteen quarts. I filled the tank and it spouted.

Obviously, the damned carburetter was placed too high for the reservoir and when the car was tilted on an incline only a full reservoir would keep it supplied. I offer this as a hint to other ignorant drivers if such there be but I. At Moulins we stopped for lunch. By here had passed something less than three hundred years ago, the lovely and well-loved daughter of Madame de Sévigné. To Moulins certainly there had come a postillion bearing one of those tear-bedewed gentle epistles that were to stand for ages as a monument to mother love. And yet, being a daughter, and knowing much of mothers, and more of daughters, I sometimes think that under all that sweetness and devotion, I see the thin raw edge of maternal acerbity. I like to think that Madame de Grignan read her letter with eagerness, and with that tender and mocking smile that children have for parents, and that she had as well a brooding and a tender look deep in her eyes for that little shadow of a daughter that flits ghostlike through her grandmother's pages, "*. . . j'aime votre fille à cause de vous : mes entrailles n'ont point encore pris le train des tendresses d'une grand'mère.*"

It was Sunday when we went through Limoges—and a day of fête. The streets go up, and the streets go down. But I will not dwell upon it. Everyone knows Limoges. I have liked it. But now I have only a nightmare impression of crowds, and carousals, and swings, of confetti, the blare of horns, and scampering children.

The gorges of Dordogne had a charm such as I have only seen in some of the western states of America. There was a delicacy and a grace about their sweeping depths that one does not have in the stern oppressive heights of Switzerland. My admiration was tempered more than a little by the fact that I was curling down a winding road cut in the side of one of these very gorges. Below us there was a straight drop of a mile or two, above were straight green heights. There was not even a balustrade along the outer edge. If the brakes failed to work, if— But to give way to such thoughts as these would not help to bring the owner's grey car safely to him. I freined and debrayered with both feet, and then stood on them to make doubly sure. And down that road twisted and turned for two long crooked breath-catching miles.

How good the placid earth looked, how solid and reliable, once this devastating beauty of scenery was passed. Monsieur Michelin had done well in his thick red and green stripes, but had peppered with too light a hand for danger points. I should have drawn one long thick positive stroke in black and have let it go at that.

Panne. Just like that, with neither warning nor explicable malady. And now there began to pass a trailing pageant. First, two young, elegant and slender French dandies, whose small electric drew noiselessly up to my side. Solemnly they adjusted horn-rimmed glasses, daintily they put on gloves, and then, reassured that no wrinkle marred their coats, and that their waists were no less elegant than they had thought, they set to work. I am perfectly sure that the inwardness of my old hand-organ was no less a mystery to them than to me. Patiently they cranked it up.

A priest passed. Up he tucked his long black robes, and wound in his turn. The three unscrewed, gazed, and screwed up again. My old grey monster lay ungratefully idle.

There passed an old woman in a donkey cart. The donkey was interested. "Tu veux t'en aller," she suggested in a suave, too sweet accent. Just what I felt like using to my car. But the donkey felt that he had found a brother. The black head-dress of that old woman of the Landes gave an ominous toss. Her broad substantial base gave an answering twitch. Then she leaned forward and she cranked her donkey up. I could only wish that the owner's car had been provided with a tail.

There passed a goat herd, and a troupe of boeufs. These had no aid to offer. But a camion was approaching at, of course, an unlawful speed, and well on the wrong side of the road. Priest and my two exquisites ranged themselves for signalling. The camion put on speed, hooted, swayed, rocked, swerved, and drew up with a shrieking of brakes about six inches from the imperturbable group.

A haughty individual descended slowly, listened to our several stories, then, "Contact on," he asked.

"Yes—that is—I suppose so—I . . ."

It wasn't.

I can't think how it had happened. And to think of that blessed priest, with his tucked-up garments, using his strength to crank a car that could not possibly go, to say nothing of the other two.

Périgueux was charming. These Périgoudians seemed to have retained their air of other days. There was something about the town that suggested the wit and plaint of the old French melodies.

France is fast losing her charm and dignity, her gift of living shrewdly but with grace. They were always a land of realists, but a realism without bitterness at base. Watteau has a gay and mocking figure, *L'indifférent*, that has caught the very essence of the spirit of the France that was, all the disillusion was there that is the heritage of their Latin blood, but as well, a clear bright piercing common-sense that blends itself with wit that it might not be less than elegant, with gaiety, and an exquisite grace. All this is passing now, for the war has bred an unlovely fear and greed. France is sombre, with a sullen brooding look. Realism without courage is a fearful thing.

From Périgueux the temper of the country seemed to change. We were nearing Midi. There was more laughter and more singing. Sunbonnets were of every colour, and frocks were like the rainbow.

"It seems to me," said the little boy, "that the ladies here look just like lady shepherdesses," And so they did.

We had rolled off three of the great maps by this time, and were approaching Bordeaux. There was now the terrifying bridge at the entrance of the city to cross. It loomed ahead of us, crowds—French crowds who will recognise no law of traffic—trams, horses and carts, bicycles, donkeys, cows drawing logs, dogs.

My speed had been so low from the beginning of the trip—never was any one such an authority on the backs of cars—that it was difficult to lower it. I crept upon that bridge. Triumphantly I made my way to the middle, and began to breathe normally once more.

“ I think somebody spoke to you back there, mummy, and he is coming after you on a bicycle.”

I stopped. What in the world had I done to be chased by gendarmes ?

“ Madame has passed the octroi without declaring her essence. Madame will do herself the honour to return. But no—it is not permitted to approach the octroi from this side. Madame will make a *détour*, accompanied by this Monsieur who will see that she is fined, and will approach the city again from the way she came.”

The little man on the bicycle had difficulty in going slow enough to keep me in sight, but eventually I was approaching the bridge again. It was, if anything, more congested than before. There was a railway crossing and then the bridge. The octroi was on the left side. I made a most elegant curve.

And then everything happened at once.

A horse ran away. People ran in every direction. Gendarmes danced and shrieked. There was a universal dancing and shrieking. Donkeys stopped across the tracks to bray. Children. Motor cycles. And an ominous purring from the car back of me that said, if you don't go on we're going over. I went—guiding with an exquisite delicacy. As a sport really it is unequalled.

“ I think somebody spoke to you back there, mummy, and he is coming after you on a bicycle.”

I had passed the octroi again.

That bridge a third time ? Never !

I put on gas. I kicked everything in sight that seemed liable to put on speed. My little man of the bicycle was well behind us.

Panne ! Yes, really.

TWO GENTLEMEN OF SOHO

By A. P. HERBERT

[It now appears that Shakespeare is best when played in modern clothes. Perhaps the themes of modern life would be better dressed in Shakespearean costume? Some may think this play wordy, but there are brutes who think Shakespeare wordy. The acting version is certainly shorter, though much less beautiful.]

CHARACTERS

THE DUCHESS OF CANTERBURY

LADY LAETITIA	-	-	-	-	-	-	<i>Her Daughter</i>
HUBERT	-	-	-	-	-	-	<i>Her Dancing-Partner</i>

LORD WITHERS

TOPSY

SNEAK	-	-	-	-	-	-	<i>A Private Detective</i>
-------	---	---	---	---	---	---	----------------------------

PLUM -	-	-	-	-	-	-	<i>A Public Detective</i>
--------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---------------------------

A WAITER

SCENE: *A Night-Club. Three tables. The middle table empty. TOPSY, reading a book, at table One. PLUM, suspicious, at table Three. Music in the ball-room, off.*

PLUM: Ho, girl, look up! A goblet of champagne?

TOPSY: I thank you, No. Indeed, 'tis after hours.

(Returns to book.)

PLUM: *(Down-cast—aside)* I am an officer from Scotland Yard,
Dressed in the likeness of an English lord,
And night by night, while seven weeks swung by,
Have I to this lewd haunt made pilgrimage
In search of some irregularity,
Cheating an entrance with a lusty lie
(But all's forgiven in a noble cause),
Sometimes disguised as a gentleman,
And sometimes in the costume of a virgin.
But nothing happens. I have offered bribes,
I have been suppliant for sweet wine or opium
After the hours by Parliament provided,
But like the fabulous Mongolian drop
Of water on strong rock for ever falling,
I have made no impression. I believe
There is no falsehood practised here but mine,
There is no jot nor tittle of the law
By these respectable impostors broken.
Well, this is hard. Only the dear old Duchess
Has with my bitterness some sweet compounded
Of nimble dances and beguiling looks.
But she engagéd with Another is.

So, gentle Sleep, upon my eyelids press,
And let me wake to catch some wickedness.

(Sleeps ; Music.)

(Enter Lady Laetitia and Lord Withers. They sit at Table Two.)

LAETITIA : What is this place ?

WITHERS : My dear Laetitia,
I do misdoubt I do it too much honour,
And you too little, by this introduction.
It is a night-club. You have seen a stone
Turned by a ploughman on the hills of Kent,
And the foul creeping many-legged things
Which dart from under, blinking in the light ?
So from this den snatch suddenly the lid
Between the midnight and the milkman's hour,
You will see slink and scutter about Soho
The very dregs and sediment of London :
Here the hot cits of Wimbledon and Streatham
With busy rakes from Kensington combine
In obscene alchemy to make the night
One long invention in debauchery,
Wine, women, drugs—

LAETITIA : In that case, Algernon,
Pardon my *absurd* curiosity,
But what is't brings you to this Hell-hole ?

WITHERS : Well,
I am a writer, and as some physician,
Searching the secrets of the human body,
Doth not the healthy but the sick pursue,
And is more happy 'midst unique distempers,
Growths, fevers, tumours, abscesses, and boils
Than with the strong and undefiled flesh,
So in the study of these diseased minds
Do I seek knowledge not to be explored
In the dull wits of the respectable,
Sucking a sweetness from the poisoned flower,
And like the wombat savouring the cheese
When 'tis corrupted—

LAETITIA : Well, I cannot say
That I see any signs of dissipation.

WITHERS (indicates Topsy and Plum) :
Mark then this lout, which in a rustic stupor
Is dead till morning, when it swills again.
Mark too this maiden that with Vestal eye
Seems to see nothing but the book she reads not—
Here's what they call a woman of the half-world,

That is, she is not one thing nor the other,
 Dubs herself "dancing partner," and for hire
 She will with any pursy sot that offers
 Waltz, fox-trot, Charleston—the whole catalogue
 Of modern antics—and the evening through
 Will counterfeit with some strange stock-broker
 A mercenary satisfaction. Pah!

(Observes dancers, off).

And yet some follies may adorn the young
 Which to the old must be disfigurement.
 How yonder matron wallows in the dance,
 A loaded waggon, creaking down the hill
 Of years and adiposity! The traffic
 Bounds and rebounds unheeded from her flanks
 Or, pausing careless in her path, is crushed.
 And on her breast is like a pendant hung
 A slim, fair, pallid, and perspiring youth
 That smiles and smiles and smiles, and is in torture.
 How like a milit'ry balloon she looks
 That is entangled in an aspen-tree!
 Do you not think so, dear?

LAETITIA : That is my mother.

WITHERS : Is't so? So 'tis!

LAETITIA : And that *her* dancing-partner!

WITHERS : I never saw her here before, Laetitia!
 These hands should quicker have torn out these eyes
 Than these harsh lips have spoken, or these legs
 Have carried me to these conclu-si-ons!

LAETITIA : It is not easy to avoid Mamma,
 On summer evenings she is everywhere.
 There is no saxophone doth not salute her
 With other mothers rounder than herself,
 Like baby elephants that after twilight
 Jump in the jungle.

WITHERS : 'Tis the Age of Age.

LAETITIA : How true! Age will be served, and this pale youth
 Must for a salary, how much I know not,
 The nightly partner of her gambols be.
 O me, 'tis pitiful to see one's mother
 Go to the dogs!

WITHERS : Weep not, Laetitia,
 But let us have a dry Martini. Ho!

(Enter a Waiter. Plum wakes up.)

PLUM : This is a Viscount, and I never saw
 A lord that did not love to break the law.

(Watches.)

WITHERS : Pluck me ten berries from the juniper
 And in a beaker of strong barley-spirit
 The kindly juices of the fruit compress.
 This is our Alpha. Next clap on your wings,
 Fly south to Italy, nor come you back
 Till in the cup you have made prisoner
 Two little thimblefuls of that sweet syrup
 The Romans call Martini. Pause o'er Paris
 And fill two egg-shells with the French Vermouth.
 Then home incontinent, and in one vessel
 Cage your three captives, but in nice proportions,
 So that no one is master, and the whole
 Sweeter than France, but not so sweet as Italy.
 Wring from an orange two bright tears, and shake,
 Shake a long time the harmonious trinity.
 Then in two cups like angels' ears present them,
 And see there swims an olive in the bowl,
 Which when the draught is finished shall remain
 Like some sad emblem of a perished love.
 This is our Omega. Go, fellow !

WAITER : Sir,
 It is too late. I cannot serve you.

PLUM : Damn !

(Music. Exit Waiter.)

WITHERS : O that in England might be born a Man,
 Sprung from the loins of English liberty,
 To rise and sweep, twice daily, like old Thames,
 In a strong tide 'gainst petty tyrannies
 And though at evening he be beaten back
 Flood in at morning to clean the channel again
 Of busy women, and suck out to sea
 Bans, prohibitions, interferences,
 Movements, Societies, Government Departments,
 Such as curtail, diminish, and cut down
 The antique privilege of true-born Englishmen
 To take their pleasure in what way they please,
 When, how, which, where, whatever and with whom !

(Chord.)

Was it for this I joined the infantry
 And took up arms against a Continent,
 To have my eating and my drinking times
 Fixed by old maids and governed by policemen ?
(Plum, with dignity, passes out to ball-room.)
 I think, were Germany the master here,
 We should at least be certain of our beer,

But see, the Duchess finds new company,
In age and form more fitter to her own !

LAETITIA : It is the fellow who was here asleep.

WITHERS : Then I have wronged him, for the man is sober.

LAETITIA : He would not else have undertaken Mother.
(Enter Hubert, exhausted, and mopping brow. He sinks into chair beside Topsy, who sits up and takes notice.)

WITHERS : And here, like some slim carrack long distressed
In the rough storm and tempest of the ocean,
Comes the frail consort of her voyaging,
His sails awrack, his rigging in disorder,
And the proud pennant drooping at the peak !
Thankful he creeps into the nearest port,
Nor is there barge, punt, fishing-boat so humble
He will not gladly berth beside her.

TOPSY : Sir,
You are distempered, and your breathing labours,
As I have seen some baby grampus pant
After a heavy supper. Why is this ?

HUBERT : Oh, it were better to be bound with vipers
To the great stone of Sisyphus, and roll
All day for ever up and down the hill,
Than to be fastened to a human mountain
Aping the antics of an early lamb !
For one is punishment, pure, unmistaken,
But this—this is the sacrilege of Pleasure,
I do a treason to my youth. I am
Not Sisyphus, not Tantalus, but both !
It were enough to caper with a whale,
Or spin a waltz with a rhinoceros,
But to be jostled in the dance by fairies,
Young, unattainable, locked i' the arms
Of men not better but more blest than I am,
And on their soft and tantalising lips
See the slow smile that mocks my servitude—
This is my torture and damna-ti-on !

(Is overcome.)

TOPSY : Be easy, Sir. This is my own employment.
I too must foot it and be gay for gold
With such as can get nobody for nothing.

HUBERT : Aye, but with many. I am bound to one . . .

TOPSY : Life is a most extraordinary thing.

HUBERT : Man, like a pebble on a glacier,
Moves imperceptibly but always down.

TOPSY : Life is a looking-glass, in which we see
Only the dull reflection of ourselves,

And every day 'tis less attractive.

HUBERT :

Come,

This is no time for dismal metaphor !
My monster's busy—while I have the chance,
Come, fellow-slave, console me in the dance !

(They get up, get out, and get off. Music.)

WITHERS :

I think between them there's a seed of love
Which shall grow up into a goodly tree. *(Kneels.)*
And you, Laetitia, so frosty-proud,
Like to those castles of cold loveliness
Which scare the shipping on the North Atlantic,
So that old Captains sniff the sky and mutter
"There is an iceberg sixty miles away,"
Hushed are the passengers and no more now
The merry quoit rings lightly on the deck,
But when the wonder bursts upon the view
Fear is forgotten—O Laetitia,
You are so beautiful that I am bold
And dare defy the miracle with wooing.
Will you not swim a moment in the sun
Of my affection—from the Arctic waters
Of dumb indifference drift Southward soon,
Hang in the middle latitudes, and then
Melt into Matrimony ? Oh, I know
'Tis not the mode to speak of marrying,
And this warm sentiment which now inflames me
Is but a mock and madness to the Young.
No more the sweet confusions of the simple,
Rings, tokens, pledges, clutchings of the hands,
Partings and moons and memories are holy—
Nay, I have heard some yearling split his sides
At roses clustered round a cottage door
Or the fond statement of a negro's passion.
For now is devotion the stale jest of fools,
And that wild ecstasy the poets sang
Is but a livelihood and theme for doctors,
Policemen, clowns, and psycho-analysts,
While he that boldly on his knees professes
A fixed affection for a single person
Calls down the cackle of the continents.
Yet, though to speak these shameful syllables
Names me a ninny, feeble in the mind,
In soul suburban—*Will you marry me ?*
LAETITIA : I am too much upset about my dam.
I think I shall not marry anyone,
But take my mother to a nunnery

And there with a little needle-work convert her
 From the vain fancies of the world—But look !
 I would not have her see me. Let us fetch
 A circuit to the ball-room, and from there
 Play spy to the event.

WITHERS :

It shall be so.

*(They go off, right. Enter, left, the Duchess, with Plum.
 Fairy music.)*

PLUM :

I hope, your Grace, I have not wearied you ?

DUCHESS :

There are the wings of swallows on your feet
 And in your arms the potency of lions.
 It is not dancing when I dance with you,
 I have no mind, no body, I am nothing,
 But a swift ghost that soars a prisoner
 In the embraces of a flying bear.

PLUM :

It is a pleasure to give satisfaction.

DUCHESS :

Are you a member ?

PLUM :

Duchess, I am not.

DUCHESS :

Then with what member—nay, in this poor House
 What member moves with such a dignity,
 Hath such a grace and nimbleness of wit
 That he dare vouch for such a visitor ?

PLUM :

I did not come with any, but alone.

DUCHESS :

Is not a Member, yet alone he came—
 Strange !

(Chord. Enter Sneak, cloaked and masked.)

SNEAK

(darkly—apart) : So. She's here. And this gross gentleman
 Should be that paramour my daughter spoke of,
 The constant prop of Ducal indiscretion.
 I will lie close and watch the giddy scene.
 Waiter !

WAITER :

What would you ?

SNEAK :

I am a detective—

Nay, do not tremble !—not His Majesty's,
 But the sworn servant of an Agency
 Skilled to pursue, see, tabulate, record
 And in the Courts most cunningly describe
 All the sly naughtiness of faithless wives,
 Or peccant husbands, as the case may be,
 Looks, nods and greetings, holding-on of hands
 After the space by decency commanded,
 Meetings and partings, secret matinées,
 The sigh drawn upward or the blinds drawn down,
 Gifts, letters, notes—But are you listening ?

WAITER :

Aye.

SNEAK :

Well, his Grace the Duke of Canterbury

Has of our House required information
 Touching the acts, deeds, conduct and behaviour
 Of that loose elephant he calls his wife.
 Whether in truth he doth suspect her virtue,
 Whether the wish was father to the thought
 And the old dog would find some cause for parting
 Such as himself he doth not dare to furnish,
 I cannot tell you. But I do persevere,
 Here is the reason, cause, and circumstance
 Why I sit here instead of somewhere else,
 And now that all lies naked as the noon
 In the hot deserts of Australia,
 Nor doth one leaf of artful stratagem,
 Lies, counterfeit, deception, subterfuge,
 Ingenious accent or oblique suggestion
 O'er the bare truth project one inch of shadow,
 And if there be a person here alive
 Who doth not now know better than his mother
 My name, my calling, and my secret business
 Then it were better for the loon to be
 Boiled in ammonia till his wits return—
 Well, if all's clear, known, plain and manifest
 Then there is nothing I would say but this,
 What *I* should like would be a spot of whiskey.

PLUM (*hearing, characteristically, last line only, pricks up ears*):

Now surely shall some misdemeanour follow!

DUCHESS: They say the antelope on summer nights
 Halts at the margin of the stream to drink.

PLUM: Fellow, we thirst! Bring port and lemonade!

WAITER: God made the lemon and the grape together
 But Man, milady, has divided them,
 And at this hour, by our wise Parliament,
 The lemon's lawful, but the grape's a crime.

DUCHESS (*unstrung*): What is this talk of Parliaments and lemons
 Am I a Duchess, to be fed on *lemons*?

Was there not somebody who *died* of lemons?

Did none arrest him nor none prosecute?

Is there no law against excessive lemons,

Or too much sugar or intemperate tea,

Or the vile craving for hot-water-bottles?

What? Lemons? Parliaments? As I'm a Duchess

Bring me the article!

WAITER (*cowed*): It shall be done.

(*He takes bottle of port from pocket and places on table.*)

PLUM: Ho! Bar the doors! Sound the alarm without!

(*Exit waiter.*)

Let none make entrance or emergencies !

(*Enter Laetitia, Lord Withers, Topsy and Hubert.*)

WITHERS : What's here ?

LAETITIA : How ?

TOPSY : So !

HUBERT : What is't ?

SNEAK : Ha !

DUCHESS : Who are you, Sir ?

PLUM : I am the Metropolitan Police,
And this my warrant. Let a trumpet sound ! (*Chord.*)

DUCHESS : O Viper !

HUBERT : Judas !

LAETITIA : Mother !

DUCHESS : O my daughter ! (*Sobs.*)

PLUM : Oh, it is anguish for a horse to suffer
The opposing reins of office and affection,
Which right and left distract the tender mind !
But this no Englishman has done, nor shall—
Make duty servant to his inclinations.
Take you these papers and at once write down
Your names and callings, titles, dignities,
Estates and mansions, orders, decorations,
Whether in wedlock you be joined or no,
How many children, houses, wives, convictions,
With all such details and appendages
As shall be pertinent. And in the morning
At Bow Street presently make apparition,
Now to your homes go softly.

DUCHESS : O the shame !

HUBERT : I will not !

WITHERS : Insolent !

LAETITIA : My mother !

SNEAK : HOLD !

PLUM : Who's this that rudely doth resist the tide
Of our proceedings ?

SNEAK : I am a detective,

Now by the Duke of Canterbury charged
To see, watch, notice, and at dawn discover
The nightly conduct of this noblewoman—

DUCHESS : Now open, Earth, and hide me !

SNEAK : " Sneak," said he

" Good, honest Sneak, if you have any skill
Or any pity for a poor old man,
Find me that snake and serpent in the grass
Which hath drawn off my Duchess from her duty,
So that in naughtiness and vain delights

She doth dishonour the evening of our days
 And utterly neglects the house-keeping—
 Find me this worm, good Sneak, that I may split him ! ”
 Thus the old Duke, with bloody, fearful oaths,
 Cleaning a pistol by his lonely bed
 Or whetting some great knife upon a stone ;
 And thus at daybreak shall I answer him :
 “ Duke, he is found, your ravisher of homes,
 Snake in the grass and cuckoo in the nest,
 A little, round, unpleasant, portly thing
 Which crawls, part trespasser and part policeman,
 Into the childish revels of the rich,
 Toys with their wives and tramples on their toes,
 Eats of their salt and presently arrests them
 For some sly spinster’s quibble in the law,
 And while he smiles contaminates the air
 With artful ruse and mean suspi-ci-on,
 Will call for wine to catch a flunkey out
 And drink with women only to denounce them—
 This, Duke, is he that, doubly double-faced,
 Has the pure spirit of your wife corrupted,
 Night after night entwined in the dance,
 Which I with evidence can justify,
 This scheming, slow, constabulary lump,
 This is your libertine and co-respondent— ! ”
 PLUM
 (enraged, takes truncheon from trousers) :
 Peace, caitiff !

SNEAK : Ha !

PLUM : Thou dog of Houndsditch !

DUCHESS : Oh !

(They fight. Hurried music.)

SNEAK : What, bully ?

PLUM : Sot !

SNEAK : Hog !

PLUM : Bastard !

DUCHESS : Oh ! I swoon !

SNEAK : Ah, would you ?

WITHERS : Peace !

LAETITIA : O gentlemen !

PLUM : Die, villain !

(Sneak dies. Chord.)

TOPSY (prostrates self on body of Sneak) :

O Sir, you have killed my father ! Why was this ?

I had no life, no being, but in him,

And now he’s not I am not either. Oh !

(Dies of grief. Chord.)

HUBERT

(kneels beside body of Topsy) :

O Topsy, Topsy, could you not have waited ?
 I did not think that you would leave me thus,
 Without one word nor tender beckoning
 To bid me follow you, yet I will follow,
 And make one date of all eternity.

(He strikes self on head with truncheon and dies. Chord.)

PLUM :

This was an issue not to be expected.

WITHERS :

Yet I have heard some countryman remark
 Clapping the swallows from a field of corn,
 " It is not seldom in the course of Nature
 After a drought not in light showers only
 Falls and descends the gentle rain of Heaven,
 But in a spate and tempest— "

PLUM :

But what's here ?

DUCHESS

(kneeling) : Now, Earth, receive me, for I die of shame !

WITHERS

(apart) : What does this bode ?

LAETITIA :

She spoke of death.

WITHERS :

I heard her.

LAETITIA :

This must be hindered.

WITHERS :

Aye.

PLUM :

But mark what follows !

DUCHESS :

Farewell to revelry, farewell the dance,
 And the gay trappings of my second youth !
 Farewell the music, and, sweet saxophone,
 Thou art not music, yet I wish thee well,
 With all late suppers and hot gala-nights,
 The coloured streamer and the blue balloon,
 Fans, rattles, dolls and india-rubber dogs,
 And wicked kippers eaten in the dawn,
 And those fierce rhythmic and delicious tunes
 Which light a fever in the veins and set
 The feet, the soul, fermenting—fare you well !
 Oh, it is selfish in the Young to grudge us
 The little joys of our declining days !
 Have they not love and Happiness their servants,
 And must all Pleasure bow to them as well ?
 This were ungenerous. And I think in Heaven,
 If there be saxophones as well as harps,
 They are not only for the Young. But here
 I shall not see a gala-night again.

(Dies of shame. Fairy music.)

LAETITIA :

O she is dead !

WITHERS :

Life, like a butterfly,
 Hath from the window of this flesh departed.
 I think I never did nor never shall

See any woman so impeccable.
 She was a person of extreme distinction,
 She had discretion, grace, nobility,
 Beauty and strength, taste, wit, intelligence,
 Was kind to animals, by children worshipped ;
 I think I never saw a woman—

LAETITIA :

Peace !

Mother, shall any other lips but mine
 Tell the long catalogue of your great virtues ?
 I was your child, and if in anything
 From the straight furrow of the good you strayed,
 I do accuse myself. I should have told you
 The snares and dangers of this wicked world,
 And nursed you always with a daughter's love.
 For you were too much guarded in your youth,
 And knew not everything, as we know now,
 Who by the experience of all temptation
 Against temptation are inoculated ;
 But you, poor innocent, were an easy prey,
 The first shrill saxophone that squeaked in London
 Was your undoing. And where'er you be,
 Whether 'tis harps or saxophones or timbrels
 That now make mischief in your neighbourhood,
 You shall not face that music quite alone.

(Dies of remorse. Chord.)

WITHERS :

Thou, too, Laetitia, art thou dead ?

PLUM :

She is.

WITHERS :

Then there is no more virtue in the world !
 Fire hath no heat, and the congealéd sun
 Swims like a frozen orange in the sky ;
 There is not any meaning anywhere,
 And to no purpose the great stars revolve !
 O my dear Tish, unique Laetitia,
 I will not in this wilderness delay,
 Where, without you, I am the one thing living,
 Like some lone seaman left upon an island,
 Who beats his head against an emptiness
 And so goes mad. Give me the knife ! I die !

(Stabs self and dies. Chord.)

PLUM :

This is a most strange consequence and finish
 Of one quite simple action.—Ho ! Without !

(Enter waiter.)

WAITER :

Where are the officers of this Society ?

PLUM :

Sir, they are drinking.

Then disturb them not,

But with all speed call ministers and surgeons.

Reverently then these bodies disentangle
 And in two chambers decently dispose them,
 Not in one vague and ill-considered heap,
 As men store pheasants, cock and hen together,
 But with due awe distinguishing the sexes.
 And this poor body, which shall top the pile,
 Cause in a cylinder to be cremated
 Nor far from Winchester, where I was born.
 This is the end. Go, fellow ! I have done.

WAITER :

Sir, from my birth I was a nervous child,
 This way and that swung weakly by suggestion,
 And could not see my fellow-creatures weep
 But I must echo them with noisy tears.
 Speak of an earthquake, and I fly the house,
 Hang o'er the bulwarks, I am sick myself.
 And now, i' the presence of these diminished figures,
 By their own act, I take it, brought to nought,
 I feel the prickings of mortality,
 Thoughts of destruction, fatal inclinations,
 Throng in my arteries—

PLUM :

It is enough.

I see far off the goal to which you stumble.
 Die, and have done with it, for I am waiting.
(Waiter knocks head thrice on floor and dies. Chord.)

PLUM :

Now do the morning and the evening meet
 To kiss the midnight in the noon of death.

(Stabs self. Music.)

Now is the circle of our questionings
 Completed in an equilateral triangle,
 Whereof like children in a labyrinth
 At the perimeter we wander dumbly
 Groping for truth, nor can one path discover
 Which is not soon concluded in a point
 That hath not magnitude, nor space, nor nothing,
 But down the windy parallels of Time
 Echoes again that interrogative
 Which mocked our entrances. Now, Plum, go off !

(Stabs self.)

Now shall the night-hawk to the trees report
 " Plum is no more, poor Plum that used to hang
 High in the branches of authority,
 Poor Plum is fallen from the bough unripened,
 Shook off too soon by unkind circumstance."

(Stabs self.)

Now Popes and persons, majesties and powers,
 Dominions, sunsets, Kings and macaroons,

Violets, marigolds, and moonlight falling,
Like children's kisses on the mountain-top,

(Stabs self.)

Dukes, ferns, and shell-fish, and all gentle things
In the high argument of love suspended,
Firelight at evening and the dawn of day,
Red wings and walnuts, oak, mahogany,
Lancaster, York, great Salisbury and Monmouth,
Hereford, Leicester, Northumberland, and Kent,
King's Cross, St. Pancras, Euston, Waterloo—
All noble-sounding and capacious words,
Come and be mourners at my funeral,
For I am in the vestibule of death.

(Stabs self.)

This is the gate and portal of my ending,
I think there doth not any word remain,
But silence and still quiet touch my lips
With the mute harmony of things unspoken.
I never was of that loud company
Which seek their harvest in a waste of words ;
" DO " was my dictionary. And my sword
Leaped from the sheath ere I could mention it.

(Stabs self.)

As you may see in some great orchestra
A little lonely fellow at the end
Sits by the cymbals, and the instruments
Thunder around him their tempestuous din,
Flutes, horns and oboes, harp and clarinet,
And the wild fiddles like the forest swaying
On Swedish mountains when the storm is high,
But he, that could with one most royal clash
Startle the city and make all that music
Like the twittering of birds appear,
Sits with his brasses, but doth make no sound
Till the conductor shall command him so,
And leaves his cymbals and goes home at last,
Still with no sound, nor kindly thanks, nor notice,
For the conductor hath forgotten him—
So sit I here, and die without a word.

(Stabs self and surveys scene.)

Well, this will puzzle them at Scotland Yard.

(Dies. Chord.)

CURTAIN.

THE POETIC IMAGINATION

By EDWARD SHANKS

KEATS, in what must have been a rare moment of insincere superficiality, declared that there had once been a rainbow in heaven but that it had been destroyed by the scientific explanation of its origin. He was, in fact, the last man seriously to have held such a view of the labours of science. But it is true that we can, in a certain qualified sense, suffer from too much knowledge, or, to put it with more precision, from too much of one kind of knowledge. The man who, seeing a rose, cannot think of it otherwise than as a member of the order Rosaceæ, with leaves alternate, stipulate, flowers terminal, often corymbose, and all the rest of it (I quote from an encyclopædia), does not really see much of the rose. And if, when we look at a rainbow, we regard it as no more than an elementary illustration of the theory of light, we do in a way destroy it. The universe of poetry has its roses and its rainbows, and we are, quite rightly, on our guard against the danger of acquiring so much knowledge of one sort about them as to leave no room for all the other sorts of knowledge.

But poetry is a scientific fact. The science in which it thus takes its place is, to be sure, the vague and unsettled science of psychology, a field of enquiry very different, in its practical possibilities and results, from what are nevertheless the sister sciences of biology and physics. The effect of this difference is important. It means that we incur the risk of filling our minds not merely with too much of one sort of knowledge but also (or instead) with something that only passes for knowledge. If an acquaintance with botanical facts were really dangerous to a full appreciation of the rose, then it would be a double disaster to acquaint ourselves with facts that were all wrong. We should have given up the substance for something less than a shadow. Therefore any pretended explanation, on a psychological basis, of the manner in which poetry in general, or any poem in particular, has come into existence is to be approached with great caution.

But poetry, roses and rainbows and all, is, at any rate potentially, a fact of science, though no one has yet discovered the means of describing it with the exactitude used in physics and biology. Certain processes of perception, mental digestion, and expression have resulted in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. We may not be able to give an accurate description of these processes, but that does not mean that, ideally, they are insusceptible of description. In all sciences there are such gaps, in some wider than in others, in psychology, perhaps, they are the widest of all. And when we apply the methods of psychological research to the study of poetry, the mere width of the gap draws in confusing considerations. So far it is from fact to fact, that we find ourselves on the way talking in terms of

æsthetic appreciation without any clear consciousness of having moved from one plane to another. And the danger of the application of psychological methods to poetry is that the critic, when he finds the cloudland of æsthetic appreciation insecure under his feet, is apt to snatch at such seeming-solid facts as the psychologist can offer him without fully realising what he is doing. *The Ancient Mariner* is, to the scientific mind, a fact and, as such, worthy of being described, though there were not in all the universe a soul to be moved by it as a poem. It is also a poem, and therefore to be judged by a standard of human values, not merely as a phenomenon in a universe which, ideally, has been emptied of human interests.

These elementary and perhaps somewhat ponderous observations are indispensable as a preliminary to any just account of Professor Lowes's book,* because he does both things. He gives us in part a study of the workings of the human mind, as exemplified in two particular cases. He does also (for one reader at least) sharpen appreciation of both *The Ancient Mariner* and *Kubla Khan*, by making a close approach to their essential spirit and by expounding the technical mastery with which that spirit is expressed. What is most important to notice is that, though he moves from one plane to the other, and that sometimes within one sentence, the distinction between the two always remains clear in his own mind and is always made clear to the reader. He does not confuse human values and the science of psychology : but he gets the utmost out of both.

Some words on the structure of the book are perhaps here in place. Professor Lowes says, in his preface :

The story which this book essays to tell was not of the teller's choosing. It simply came, with supreme indifference to other plans, and autocratically demanded right of way. A glittering eye and a skinny hand and a long grey beard could not have done more summary execution, nor, for that matter, could the Wedding-Guest himself (who also had other fish to fry) have been, at the outset, a more reluctant auditor. But the reluctance swiftly passed into absorbing interest, as the meaning of the chance glimpse which did the business was disclosed. . . . Once started on, however, the story has been written in its present form (I fear I must confess) quite frankly for the writer's own enjoyment—in part for the sheer pleasure of following into unfamiliar regions an almost untrodden path ; not a little for the fearful joy one snatches from the effort to exhibit, with something that approaches clarity, the order which gives meaning to a chaos of details.

The reluctance of the auditor is not at all difficult to understand. The task thus imposed on him involved the careful study of all the books which Coleridge read, or *may* have read, during certain years of his life, and Coleridge was an omnivorous and indefatigable reader. Some notion of the extent of this labour may be conveyed by a single instance. Professor Lowes suspected that Coleridge might have read Priestley's *Opticks* and therefore, in search of proof, "plodded doggedly through eight hundred and six obsolete pages of the heroic dimensions of those unhurried days," to find what he was looking for on the last, the eight hundred and

* *The Road to Xanadu*. By John Livingston Lowes. Constable. 31s. 6d.

seventh page. Not all of his labours, of course, were as painful as this. His researches have taken him through some very pleasant places, notably the early voyages from which Coleridge derived so much of his material for the *Ancient Mariner*. But the total amount of reading required staggers the imagination. It was one thing for Coleridge to go through all these books dwelling only on what happened to take his fancy : it was another for Professor Lowes to go through them with a never-sleeping eye for what *might* have happened to take Coleridge's fancy. A list of " the works most frequently referred to " fills twelve pages and is far from being exhaustive.

But Professor Lowes handles his vast bundle of learning with remarkable ease. No account of his book would be just without some allusion to its uniform readableness and to its merits as a book to " read in." It has in the first place something of the charm of the detective story. The author is out hunting and he knows how to take the reader with him on the chase, luring him on by never seeming to be more than a pace or two ahead. And he very cunningly conveys a suggestion (probably *suggestio veri*, to be sure,) that he is taking a holiday. The professor of literature on the prowl for sources is an object of suspicion as much to the poet as to the Philistine. We all know too well these treatises on irrelevant derivations, these enquiries whether Shakespeare in mentioning the sea-coast of Bohemia may not have had in mind that moment during the Middle Ages when, under some Ottokar or other, the Czechs did touch the Adriatic. We know that such works are compiled by men whose business it is to write about literature but who can think of nothing better to write. But Professor Lowes, by means of an attractive candour and a sort of restful gaiety, disarms us of our suspicions. There can be no doubt that he is enjoying his researches and he soon persuades us to share his enjoyment.

Also, unlike so many professors of literature, he knows how to write himself. Such webs of citation and exposition are difficult to weave. In clumsy hands they may become the most dreary things in the world, but in adroit hands the most fascinating. I quote one passage to show how adroit Professor Lowes is :

The South, like that West, beyond which was thought to lie the Orient, held with particular tenacity the imagination which strove to grasp and comprehend the world—a world which, as it happened, demanded to complete it an *alter orbis*, its counterpart and complement, at the Antipodes. And the Antipodes lay, enveloped in mystery, in the oceans about the austral pole.

But between were fire and ice and the terrors of impenetrable mists. No documents in the world are more eloquent than the laconic legends of the early maps. One word and only one stretches in dim capitals across the whole southern hemisphere on a fifteenth-century chart. It is BRUMAE : fogs—the dense and chilling mists, which, like the flesh of the spectre-woman on the skeleton-ship, "thick man's blood with cold." "Frigida," and "Perusta" : "frozen" and "burned"—the icy breath of polar seas and the fiery noon of equatorial calms—front each other across the huge trough of the ocean (alveus Oceani) ; that ocean which under the heat of the sun (as the *Imago Mundi* states) boils like a pot (magnus Oceanus qui

solis calore dicitur fervere ut cacabus). As the "ocean unknown to the sons of Adam" (Oceanus filiis Ade incognitus) of a score of maps, it repels access of mortals (accessus repellit hominum) to the South. "Humanus oculus non videt": no human eye beholds it, declares the legend on a twelfth-century map, and a contemporary mappemonde tells us why: it is the ocean which no mortal sees by reason of that zone in which the elements melt with fervent heat (Oceanus quem nemo vidit hominum propter zonam torridam). And like sea, like land. "Dixerto dexabitado per caldo" (a desert uninhabited on account of heat) stands in red along the sides of the South on a fifteenth-century planisphere. But beyond the ocean lies another barrier: circulus australis que est ex frigore inhabitabilis, as a map of the twelfth century has it—the austral zone where nobody can live by reason of the cold. It is a grim vocabulary, that of the mappemondes. To dare the South was literally, in the mediaeval mind, "to bathe in fiery floods or to reside in thrilling regions of thick-ribbed ice." And so, between the three known continents of the North and the mysterious antipodal world of the Antichthones there was a great gulf fixed—a gulf like that between the living and the dead.

That, quite apart from its relevance to the argument about Coleridge (and it is relevant) makes uncommonly good reading of its kind.

With so much said about the manner of the book, we may proceed to its thesis. This is that, owing to certain lucky circumstances, we can distinguish in *The Ancient Mariner* and in *Kubla Khan* the source of practically all the images and thus, with a reasonably complete knowledge of the materials used by the poet, we can come at any rate a step nearer to discovering what it is that the poet does with his materials in order to produce a poem. There has been preserved in the British Museum a note-book in which, between 1795 and 1798, Coleridge jotted down without system what he read, what he observed, what he thought and what he planned. What he read, perhaps, most of all—but this had a definite connection with what he planned, for the passages which he laboriously transcribed seem to have been those that struck him as suitable for use in verse.

This may appear at first sight strange and unpromising conduct on the part of a poet. And indeed one may say that when Coleridge noted something as likely to be useful in this way, he did not use it, or he used it in a poem that is not one of his best, or he used it in a way that he did not intend. At this time he was collecting materials for a projected series of *Hymns to the Sun, Moon and Elements*. I agree with Professor Lowes that we need not regret that this work was never accomplished. It would have been interesting, for even in the vast bulk of Coleridge's generally unread verse there is little that is not. But while the project came to nothing, much of the stuff he got together for it was subjected to a less deliberate process of the imagination and reappeared, marvellously transformed, in the *Ancient Mariner*.

What Professor Lowes does is to show us, in conjunction with the poem itself, what went into the poet's mind before the poem was written. Neither he nor anyone else can tell us precisely what happened to the raw material before it re-emerged. He hints, rather than states, a surmise—so careful is his hinting that I am not quite sure whether the surmise is

his or my own—that the impulse behind the poem was Coleridge's desire for adventure in the unexplored parts of the world. Scraps of information from every kind of source were drawn into the mill and there utilised. Unfortunately, the scraps are too many for any adequate account to be given here of Professor Lowes's theory of their synthesis. To explain one stanza :

About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danced at night ;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue, and white.

—he cites a dozen or more authors, one of whom is Shakespeare. And, if he misses with one of his dozen or more barrels, he generally hits with enough of them to induce conviction. His merely verbal parallels, taken from Coleridge's known reading, are enough to persuade one that his general argument is sound. Coleridge, I take it, noted some of these details consciously because he thought they would be of use to him in a projected work, and some of them merely because he liked them. But, for whatever reason his mind received them, there they were, subject to what Professor Lowes calls a "potent alchemy." It is possible to devise innumerable phrases to describe the action of that "alchemy," but none of them would bring us much nearer to a real understanding of it. There was some marvellous selective process. Out of several passages in the old voyages, Coleridge would bring together from here one word and from there another to make a picture which does not on the face of it suggest any such work of assemblage. If we are to assume any prime force as underlying this work, we must suppose that what he read induced in Coleridge a peculiar form of nostalgia—the nostalgia for places and experiences which are "home" only in a highly transcendental sense. I mean that Coleridge did not feel himself "at home" anywhere in ordinary life and imagined a home of which he found hints in his reading. (This experience is, in various forms, not uncommon even among minds of a different type. Compare Goethe's peculiar yearning for Italy, which, as it grew more acute, forbade him even to open the Latin poets, so painfully did they stimulate it.) He tried indeed to turn his desire into a practical channel : this is what underlies the absurd scheme of a "Pantisocratic" settlement in America. But he must early have known in his heart that he was not the man for such an enterprise and, more, that such an enterprise could never have satisfied him. He yearned for the fabulous unexplored and the Susquehanna, had he ever reached it, would have been neither.

Out of this yearning and frustration came *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. But to make explicit this theory, which is already implicit in Professor Lowes's argument, is to do no more than to remark on the fire under the cauldron, Professor Lowes having already enumerated the ingredients which have been thrown in. There remains a gap—the gap, if an unsatisfactory metaphor may be permitted, between so many pieces of raw meat and vegetable and a nourishing stew. But to the

pre-Promethean savage who does not know that meat and vegetables can be cooked, the stew appears not merely with a gap in the explanation but as altogether inexplicable. He is somewhat advanced—and we are all more or less savages in this matter—if he can see the ingredients going into the pot and watch them, with however little understanding, until they come out again. The fire remains mysterious to him, but he at least can form some idea of the part it plays in the process of cooking. He can analyse the process and isolate the unknown quantity.

Professor Lowes does this for us at least, but he can do little more. He describes the appearance of the flames and something of their effect, but he knows no more than the rest of us about the real principle of combustion. He skirmishes towards a solution of the problem when he applies with equal success to *Kubla Khan*, a dream, the methods which he has applied so successfully to the *Ancient Mariner*, a poem written in the waking state.

He shows incontrovertibly that here too the poet's reading supplied all the materials, and here too we may suppose that the poet's longing for the fabulous unexplored supplied fuel for the fire under the pot. But what makes this second application of the analytical method especially striking is the fact that *Kubla Khan* was really composed in a dream. Its sources were of the same order as those of *The Ancient Mariner*, but the waking, deliberate mind played no part in their transformation. In this we have an undoubted light, doubtful as may be its exact import, on the working of the poetic imagination. Professor Lowes's images of the *atomes crochus*, the atoms that mysteriously make connections with one another, and "the Well" into which facts flow and out of which poetry proceeds probably bring us as close to an understanding of the process as any amount of psychological argument. There is a mysterious power of the mind which manifests itself in most of us in dreams and in some of us in poetry.

I share Professor Lowes's distrust of Freudian analysis as applied to poetry, just as I distrust it when applied to dreams. The symbolism used for interpretation is always, and must necessarily be, excessively arbitrary. But a little practice in remembering dreams and a little experience in scrutinising their details soon show that the images they contain, whatever these images may mean, can be traced back to their sources in experience in so overwhelming a majority of instances as to make it certain that they all *could* be traced in favourable circumstances. I dreamt the other night that I was on a voyage through the Mediterranean. It was all spread out before my eyes, about as large as a five-acre field. It was steeply bordered with mountains which were covered with snow down to the water's edge. I called my companion's attention to this unexpected phenomenon and then said, "It is a pity it will be dark when we pass Crete." Now the original motive of the dream was probably no more than an insistent desire for a holiday. The snow is traceable to the last holiday I took, when (with the same companion as in the dream) I went to the Silesian mountains, which I had previously known only much later in the year,

and was surprised to find snow in the valleys. The remark about Crete was directly due to a letter received two or three days before from a friend who had just gone through the Mediterranean and who lamented having passed Crete at night.

This dream was quite trivial, but it was in essence an effort of what we call the "creative imagination." It made a connected story out of odd, unrelated scraps of experience. What, to my mind, is proved by Professor Lowes is that this is how poetry is composed, that this is what we mean by "inspiration."

Experience of one sort or another, from life or from books, goes into the mind, resides there for a time and then comes out again refashioned. The parts played respectively by the conscious and the unconscious mind are indefinitely hard to distinguish. Professor Lowes has, in this connection, a note on the versification of *Kubla Khan*, apparently so adroit for a dream-poem, which says as much as can be shortly said:

Any technique acquired through the conscious expenditure of time and labour . . . becomes in large degree, as everyone knows, unconscious in its exercise. Step by step, through stubborn persistence in acutely conscious effort, it builds itself up below the field of consciousness, until at last consciousness, released through its own self-imposed subjection, is free to interpret or create at will. When, then, images like those upon whose rhythmical expression Coleridge had expended infinite time and pains poured suddenly up in the unconsciousness of sleep, is it incredible that a craftsmanship which had itself become through rigorous discipline more than half unconscious, should respond, in a glorious *tour de force*, to a familiar stimulus? The point is not one on which to dogmatise. But I suspect that quite as directly as the substance of the poem rose from Coleridge's indefatigable reading, the sure flight of its rhythms sprung from a control achieved through the assiduous elaboration, in *The Ancient Mariner* and *Christabel*, of a metrical technique.

That might make the text for a disquisition on the whole subject of literary technique in its relation to the imagination, but there, for the present occasion, it must be left.

The method which Professor Lowes has applied to Coleridge would, it seems likely, be profitable, as confirming his conclusions, if it could be applied to other poets. But the immediate difficulty arises that not every poet derives his material from sources so easily accessible. The impression Coleridge got from a book can be traced: the impression some other had from life cannot. The poet goes for a walk and sees rooks circling round an elm or pigeons rising from a stubble-field. The fact sinks into his consciousness and arises thence, transmuted, hours or months or years later. If, when that happens, he still knows how it got there, he does not record the fact.

But certain enquiries might perhaps be undertaken. We know, for example, so much of even the smallest details of Goethe's life that some part of his sources could probably be established. There are interesting parallels between his letters and journals and his poems that have never

yet been systematically investigated. Another possible field for enquiry, though a thorny one, lies in Poe. Poe, it must be confessed, lied so often and so whole-heartedly about his reading that any investigator of Professor Lowes's thoroughness would certainly waste his time on a good many wild-goose chases. But it is not impossible to disentangle the truth from the lies, and it would be a good thing if, by way of a confirmatory experiment, the attempt could be made.

It might, I think, if it could be made on Poe with the same exhaustiveness, provide some new information on that peculiar quality in poetry, which, despairing of exactly defining it, we call "magic." May this not be the result of distillation from books? The authors who possess it are always, in the best sense, "bookish," that is, gifted with the power of making their own the experiences of other men as recorded in books. They desire more of life than one lifetime, devoted already to learning how to write, could directly give them. Instead of spending laborious years searching for disillusionment at the poles, they stay at home, nursing the *mal de l'au-de-là* and, under the pressure of this disease, extract a few grains of gold from the quartz of much banality.

This is merely a casual and hardly considered suggestion, but it gives some idea of the trains of thought set in motion by Professor Lowes's enquiry. The machinery of the poetic imagination remains as mysterious as before. We can, if we are without mechanical understanding, see a dynamo and still not know how it works, but at least we have gone one step behind the phenomenon of the electric light in seeing the dynamo. That is what Professor Lowes enables us to do here: very much remains unknown, but he has helped us to take this one step.

CONTEMPORARY GERMAN LITERATURE

The Younger Generation

By WILLIAM ROSE

IN 1913, the year of the centenary celebration of the War of Liberation from the yoke of Napoleon, and the twenty-fifth year of the Kaiser's reign, Gerhart Hauptmann received a commission to produce a *Festspiel*, to be staged by Reinhardt, and he wrote a play which lauded the spirit of Peace instead of hymning the patriotic fervour of 1813. There was much objection to the play, and a protest from the Crown Prince led to its withdrawal. A year later came the War, and in common with the writers of all the other belligerent countries, those of Germany felt the thrill of patriotism which inspired them to outpourings of the most ephemeral and flatulent type. The poetic resources of the country were, so to speak, adapted to war-work. It has been estimated that the number of patriotic poems published in Germany in the first year of the War amounted to a million and a half. There is no reason to suspect that many of them possessed higher worth or dignity than the majority of those which were produced simultaneously in this country. As in England, where older poets descended to the writing of such pathetic stuff as showed them to be entirely out of touch with the soul and attitude of the men in the trenches, so in Germany the older writers tried their hand at verses which would have suited admirably the bellicose spirit of the wars of a hundred years ago. They were completely foreign to the mentality of the citizen soldier, who realized that the men in the trenches opposite were also human beings, and had little use for the bombastic clap-trap produced amid the artificially-created atmosphere at home. It is significant that the real soldiers' song was a quaint sentimental medley based on Uhland's famous Volkslied, *Ich hatt' einen Kameraden*, which is supposed to have originated before the War and been spread by the Wandervögel; it concludes with the lines:

Die Vöglein im Walde,
Sie sangen all so wunder-wunderschön,
In der Heimat, in der Heimat,
Da gibt's ein Wiedersehn.

In this song there is no more of the jingoism of the truculent old gentlemen at the *Stammtisch* than there was in *Tipperary*, and the best of the war poetry is in the same Volkslied tradition. The literature of the War can be divided into two phases, of which the second began in 1917, or slightly earlier. Even in 1914 there were voices raised against war. The group of writers whose mouthpiece was the periodical *Die Aktion*, founded in 1911 and edited by Franz Pfemfert, took their stand against the War

from the beginning. A second important expressionist periodical, of a more abstract tendency, was *Der Sturm*, founded in 1910 and edited by Herwarth Walden.

When we come to deal with the second phase, which began with weariness and culminated in despair, it must be borne in mind that whereas in England we speak of "The War" and its effect on the mentality of the younger generation, the Germans speak about "The War and the Revolution," and the difference is vital. The effect of a lost war *and* a revolution was catastrophic. There was in England no upheaval of the national soul as there was in Germany, an upheaval which explains the ecstatic, mystic, even apocalyptic nature of much of the literature produced between 1917 and 1921, the period of chaos.

There was, of course, a very strict censorship, which was afterwards abolished by the Revolution, but the first literary signs of the change of mentality came from the poets at the front, mainly from those of *Die Aktion*, which had been the chief exponent of political poetry, but had been compelled by the outbreak of war to eliminate the political element. After the War it became for a time the literary mouthpiece of the Spartakist movement.

The new literature appeared under the banner of Expressionism, which, though by no means a new art form, became popular only with the change of spirit about 1917 and reached its climax during the revolution period. By 1921 it was practically dead. The name "Expressionism" came from the sister art of painting and was used in the first place to denote the opposite of Impressionism. As Kasimir Edschmid, one of the leaders of the movement, explains :

The world is there. It would be absurd to reproduce it. The greatest task of Art is to search out its intrinsic essence and create it anew.

Each object has its profounder aspect, which our eyes are too blinded by experience of its external qualities to see. Everything should be related to eternity. For example, a sick man is not seen only as an individual sufferer, but becomes the symbol of illness itself ; his suffering is but a reflection of the suffering of the whole of creation, and when an artist wants to depict a sick man, he must depict the very quality of sickness. A house is not seen as a mere construction of brick and mortar, an angular object with qualities of beauty or ugliness, as the case may be, but its actual nature is studied until its profounder aspect is revealed, until it is freed from the restraint of reality and appears as an *expression* of its ultimate character, even if it thereby lose all resemblance to that which generally comes into our mind when we think of a house. Similarly, in expressionistic art, a man ceases to be an individual, he becomes a concrete representation of the abstract conception *Man*. The work of art is the medium by means of which the spectator or reader is enabled to enter into the emotional mood in which the artist created it. Therefore, if the spectator looks only with his physical eye, he may see things which appear to him absurd or grotesque.

The Impressionists tried to reproduce the variety of life, and gave an optical impression which was momentary. The Expressionists seek to visualize the eternal, and forgo painting pictures of the external world of appearances.

This art is an attempt to escape from the ugliness and suffering of life by diving beneath the surface, which appears shifting and worthless, in order to find the true basis of the cosmos and something fixed and essential to grasp. The War fostered this tendency, but there is something very similar in Greek philosophy in the theory of Platonic ideas.

In poetry and drama writers tried to obtain their effects primarily by concentration, and to this end they laid violent hands on the language. Articles, prepositions, grammatical inflections and prefixes were regarded as unnecessary and could be omitted. Substantives could be used to form new and unusual verbs, or verbs to form new substantives. The natural consequence was that each poet tried to create his own language, and since expressionist drama or poetry is not in any case easy to understand, confusion became worse confounded. The tendency to reduce verbal expression to its most primitive form reached its *reductio ad absurdum* in the revolt against intellectualism known as the Dada movement. As one Dadaist poet has said, "We write without taking into account the meaning of words!"

The most celebrated of the anthologies of expressionist poetry is called *Menschheitsdämmerung*, a title which expresses both the realisation of the twilight of the world which is at the turn and the hope of a new dawn for humanity. The anthology is divided into four sections, headed respectively *Sturz und Schrei*, *Erweckung des Herzens*, *Aufruf und Empörung*, *Liebe den Menschen*, titles which explain themselves. It contains not only the work of many of the most celebrated poets of the new school, but also some extraordinarily convulsive efforts.

The following is an example, by no means extreme, of the abstract poetry fostered by the periodical *Der Sturm*. It is by August Stramm, who fell on the Russian front in 1915, and is called *Schwermut* :

Schreiten Streben
 Leben sehnt
 Schauen Stehen
 Blicke suchen
 Sterben wächst
 Das Kommen
 Schreit !
 Tief
 Stummen
 Wir.

The poet is obviously striving for ultimate concentration and simplicity, using hardly any punctuation except exclamation marks, and we can understand why this particular poem appears in the section *Sturz und Schrei*. Stramm is the classic example for this obscure, staccato, stammering kind

of verse, to which we cannot attribute much importance, for it is difficult to believe that the emotions or thoughts of these poets were too profound or complicated for expression by the various ordinary media of poetry.

There are poets innumerable, but in addition to those who have already been mentioned, or who will be mentioned later, it will suffice to note the group of labourer poets, some of whom achieved considerable celebrity, such as Karl Bröger, Gerrit Engelke, Max Barthel and Heinrich Lersch, the tinsmith who wrote one of the most popular of the war poems with the refrain "Deutschland muss leben, und wenn wir sterben müssen."

The endeavour to be original at all costs is perhaps due to a self-consciousness which is characteristic of the majority of minor German poets. They possess too keen a realisation of their poetic nature to be able to produce effortless poetry, or even the appearance of effortlessness. The reader has a continual, uneasy feeling that he is being present during the pangs of creation. In a recent anthology of living poets called *Saat und Ernte*, each poet was asked to choose those of his own poems which he desired to have included, and has prefixed in each case a short autobiographical sketch. To show what I mean by the self-consciousness of these poets, I will quote extracts from two of the autobiographies :

. . . an old priestly race bequeathed to me an inclination for the next world. The fighting energy of my ancestors rests in the dreamy veins of their descendant. If these are the elements of my being, they are also the elements of my poetry.

And in another case, after a few words about his lyrical disposition, the poet continues in the following strain :

I early felt the superior force of my environment and the incompatibility of my personal, spiritual disposition with the mysterious and dangerous forces of existence.

These quotations are typical of the autobiographies. We may expect such an objective attitude to his own Ego in a Goethe summing up at the end of a long life, but the effect is either pathetic or ridiculous in a young poet at the outset of his career.

Thomas Mann is reported to have said in conversation that the young generation during the War was not revolutionary but loud. That is unjust, but the intense earnestness with which they take themselves would in a less serious nation than the German lead one to suspect the profundity of their feelings. It is to be explained by the fact that whereas the older generation looks upon the War as an incident in history, the younger generation regards it as a definite turning-point in civilisation. Their humanitarianism is large ; they no longer take for their themes their merely personal emotions and sufferings. Their sympathy is cosmic, and their compassion covers the whole of humanity. That is why their dramatic characters are types, but they are inclined to mistake reformatory enthusiasm, religious fervour and even political rhetoric for poetry ; to consider tempestuous emotion and obsession by ideas a surrogate for a sense of form or beauty.

The fact that characters appear mostly as types, coupled with a strong

tendency to allegory, is perhaps the most striking feature of expressionist plays. Walter Hasenclever in his drama *Der Sohn*, one of the pre-war expressionist dramas, treats the father-son conflict, which appears again and again in the dramatic literature of this period, and is, of course, of fundamental importance in psycho-analysis, as typical of the father-son conflict which appears anew in every generation. The father represents the principle of authority, against which the son, the symbol of the repressed section of humanity with its urge for liberty, rebels. Parental love is regarded as selfishness. These young men want themselves to be a beginning, and not heirs to the past, with which they want to break more completely than any previous generation had wished to do. It is extraordinary how frequently we find the death-wish against the father in the works of this period. As a contrast we sometimes see the attempt to weave a new myth round the mother, as in Fritz von Unruh's drama *Ein Geschlecht*. The same attitude towards the father appears in Franz Werfel's *Spiegel-mensch*, Arnolt Bronnen's *Vatermord*, Ernst Toller's *Die Wandlung*, Georg Kaiser's *Die Koralie*, Anton Wildgans's *Dies Irae*.

Characters are often given mere type-distinctions, as in *Ein Geschlecht*, where the characters are The Mother, The Eldest Son, The Cowardly Son, The Youngest Son, The Daughter and a Leader of the Soldiers. Reinhard Sorge's *Bettler*, which is the earliest of the expressionist dramas, having been written in 1910, introduces typical groups such as Newspaper Readers, Prostitutes and Aviators, who speak in chorus. Allegorical characters appear in various forms—as a Stranger representing Death in Wildgans's *Armut*, as a Friend representing Rebellion against parental authority in Hasenclever's *Sohn*—but this is not particularly novel. In von Unruh's non-expressionist play *Offiziere*, there appears a strange officer among the other officers on board ship who are on their way to fight in South-West Africa, and he represents Death; while as long ago as 1891, Wedekind had introduced a "Vermummter Herr," as a representation of the life impulse, into the last scene of *Frühlings Erwachen*.

The endeavour to create types instead of individuals results often in the creation of a false psychology. Actions do not follow logically from character and environment, and the characters are not drawn in their natural *milieu*, since they are abstract and not dependent, as real people would be, on fortuitous conditions of place and time. Actual scenes alternate with dream scenes, and instead of a dramatic representation we get a lyrical one. The new art, in fact, finds its best expression in the lyric, and between 1910 and 1920 it is the lyrical mood which predominates in literature, even the drama being pervaded with lyricism. The dramatists, in their convulsive search for a new style, often employ an extreme conciseness of phraseology, and their characters speak in jerky sentences which at times remind one forcibly of Mr. Alfred Jingle in *The Pickwick Papers*. The tendency to exaggerated concentration gave rise to a whole group of what are known as *Schreidramen*, where the characters speak either in monosyllables or in incoherent screams. Sometimes the stage

directions occupy more space than the text, and here there can, perhaps, be traced the influence of Mr. Bernard Shaw, who in Germany is classed with Shakespeare and Oscar Wilde as one of our three great dramatists.

The logical outcome of expressionist drama, if it had not died an early death, would have been its approximation to the film, for which the frequent change of scene, the gradual elimination of language in favour of action, the complicated lighting, and the alternation of reality with dream scenes seem peculiarly to qualify it. In Hasenclever's *Sohn*, everything that happens is supposed to be seen from the standpoint of the son himself, as in the film *Dr. Caligari* everything is seen through the eyes of a madman, and the whole action and scenery given the requisite twist.

The majority of expressionist writers are socialists, and the object of their contempt and hostility is the bourgeois, the representative of the existing order, who is regarded as the upholder of an effete economic and ethical system. Frank Wedekind, who with Strindberg is one of the chief founts from which expressionist drama drew its inspiration, had already done pioneer work in the pillorying of the bourgeois; and the two outstanding satirists of to-day, who never tire of holding up the bourgeois, his views and foibles, to ridicule are Heinrich Mann the novelist and Carl Sternheim the writer of comedies, whose ambition is said to be to become the German Molière. Heinrich Mann is celebrated for the trilogy of novels in which he mercilessly lashes German society in the reign of William II, *Der Untertan*, *Die Armen*, and *Der Kopf*. *Der Untertan* was first published in 1918, having been prohibited by the Censor four years earlier. Mann traces the decadence of the ruling classes in Wilhelmine Germany to the instinct of servility, of deference to the man above. Sternheim has turned out comedy after comedy burlesquing the hypocrisy and other failings of the bourgeois, but his method is purely destructive, and his satire entirely intellectual. The extreme revolutionary attitude is represented by Johannes R. Becher, who appears to confuse the mission of the poet with that of the political orator and leader of the proletariat. The capitalist, as a stockbroker or banker, appears in grotesque guise in Kaiser's *Von Morgens bis Mitternachts*, and in Toller's *Masse Mensch*, both of which plays have been produced in London. In Kaiser's *Die Koralle* both the son and daughter of the milliardaire are socialists. Among the poets who actually took part in the Revolution, it is only necessary to mention Kurt Eisner and Ernst Toller, the former of whom was assassinated, while the latter spent five years in prison for his part in the Communist outbreak in Munich.

A striking feature in this rejection of modern civilisation is hostility to the large town. The developing sense of realism in German literature during the nineteenth century, which culminated in the Naturalist movement, had hitherto paid admiring tribute to the mechanical forces invented by man to overcome his natural limitations. Now there came a change of attitude. Mechanical forces came to be regarded as the means by which the workers are kept in subjection in gloomy, smoky towns, where they are

unable to obtain a glimpse of green fields or even of the sun. There is less cause for this attitude in Germany than there would be in England, where the reflection in literature does not exist to anything like the same extent. The poets who had sung hymns in praise of machines now switched over to the opposite extreme. The voracious appetite of the towns which destroy everything green and smiling and swallow up the creatures of the countryside, human and animal, is expressed most powerfully by Armin T. Wegner. He sees a vision of towns which reach to the sky and spread over the face of the earth in one vast, endless town :

Euch Ebenen, die in das Endlose führen,
 Alle verschlingt unserer Mauern zermalmender Mund.
 Bis wir zum Saume der Meere uns strecken,
 Nie sind wir müde, wir werden nie satt,
 Bis wir zum Haupte der Berge uns recken
 Und die weite, keimende Erde bedecken :
 Eine ewige, eine unendliche Stadt !

Bound up with this nostalgia for simple forms of existence are disappointment and disillusion at the result of the Revolution, I will not say of the War. The majority of the expressionist poets were highly, if vaguely, idealistic and opposed to the materialism of the age. The abuses against which they had protested disappeared apparently with the Revolution, but too much of the old mentality still remained with those in authority, and the hopes of the young men, who saw the same old world rising like a phoenix from its own ashes, were scattered to dust. A reflection of this disillusionment is to be seen in many of the revolutionary dramas written about the year 1920, in which a character is acclaimed by the masses as a leader, only to be rejected by them since they are incapable of sympathising with his high ideals ; he is martyred by the very people he sought to save. Johannes R. Becher had already warned the poets that the masses would swirl over their heads and that they would be the first to be crucified. It may not be out of place in connection with this atmosphere of pessimism to note that the first volume of Spengler's *Untergang des Abendlands* has just gone into its hundredth edition. Although the title of this book was originally intended as a protest against the optimism of the pre-war mentality, it was seized upon as a catchword after the collapse, when the view was eagerly welcomed that the cultural possibilities of the western world were exhausted.

It is tempting to draw a parallel with the eighteenth-century Storm and Stress movement, and one thinks involuntarily of Karl Moor's outburst against his ink-spilling century. In the eighteenth century literature provided a substitute for political activity, in the twentieth century literature preceded revolution. The Storm and Stress movement lacked the all-embracing compassion of the twentieth-century writers. But the most striking difference between the expressionist movement and all that had gone before is in the attitude to women. Love no longer plays the dominant role. The relations between man and woman appear intellectual rather than emotional. Perhaps nothing shows the

gulf between Gerhart Hauptmann and the younger generation more than the former's satiric idyll *Die Insel der Grossen Mutter*. Schnitzler continues to produce psychological and erotic studies of neurotic characters. Stefan George stands at the opposite extreme, and his school appears to be more interested in the friendship of man for man. There is even an apparent lack of sympathy among the Expressionists for the important place given to women by Goethe ; and they are, of course, even further out of touch with the smouldering passion of Dehmel. An exception must be made in the case of Fritz von Unruh, in whose work the relation of man and woman is of primary importance. When the sexual element appears in expressionistic work, it is generally in the form of abnormality.

The ideas germinating in the minds of writers at this time can best be seen in four or five typical works. Reinhard Goering's drama *Seeschlacht* reproduces the spirit in the navy which culminated in the mutiny of 1917 and the later revolt at Kiel ; Fritz von Unruh's war-book *Opfergang* is a mirror of the coming change of mind in the army ; Clara Viebig's novel *Töchter der Hekuba* and its sequel *Das Rote Meer*, where nearly all the characters are women, describe the terrible conditions at home, and Ernst Toller's *Hinkemann* shows something of the post-war conditions.

Seeschlacht contains seven characters, all sailors, and the scene of action is the armoured turret of a battleship which is steaming towards the Battle of Jutland. The drama reproduces the morbid atmosphere of expectation and the conflicting thoughts in the men's minds. The fifth sailor expresses the awakening sense of revolt against the idea of military duty, and this is perhaps the very first sign, in the works which the censor allowed to be made public, of the coming collapse. But when the battle begins, the incipient mutineer is the bravest fighter. The crew of the turret is wiped out and the dying words of the fifth sailor are :

Ich habe gut geschossen, wie ?

Ich hätte auch gut gemeutert ! Wie ?

Aber schiessen lag uns wohl näher ? Wie ?

Muss uns wohl näher gelegen haben ?

When it came to the crisis, it was easier to fight than to mutiny, so the drama really ends on a question mark.

Fritz von Unruh's *Opfergang* was written in the trenches before Verdun in 1916. It describes the preparation for and the actual attack of his company on the fortress ; the change from hope to the realisation of failure, and the careless lack of understanding of the people at home when the soldier goes on leave. It crystallises the change in the mentality of Unruh himself, a regular officer in the Prussian cavalry, whose earlier plays idealised the orthodox sense of duty in the German army, but whose later works are ranked among the finest expressions of that pacific idealism which sprang from the War. *Opfergang* demonstrates the ultimate realisation of the tremendous sacrifices which were made for infinitesimal gain, or even for none at all. It is best compared with the greatest of all war-books, Henri Barbusse's *Le Feu*. The French novel is sober and realistic,

even cynical, the German book is full of fire and emotion ; together they give a better idea of what the War on the western front was like, both materially and spiritually, than anything else that has been written in the field of imaginative literature.

The scene of Clara Viebig's novel *Töchter der Hekuba* is a suburb of Berlin, whence all the men have gone, and the author pictures the tragic combination of monotony, and fear of what the day may bring for the women whose husbands, father and sons are at the war, with the accumulating misery of lengthening casualty lists and food queues ; the sense of primitive reality gradually breaking through the old prepossessions and artificial barriers.

Toller's tragedy *Hinkemann* is supposed to take place about 1921. Hinkemann has returned from the war as a sexual cripple. The man who could not bear to see an animal hurt is compelled to earn a living by biting rats and mice to death at a fair to amuse the spectators. This cripple is presented to the audience with profound irony as the "incarnation of German strength." He is seen by his wife, who feels the deepest sympathy for her husband reawakening, but a man whom he had looked upon as his friend lies to him that she had laughed. In the street he sinks to the ground and people collect round him, but when military music is heard in the next street, people rush to see the soldiers. On the way home he purchases a bronze statue of Priapus, who appears to him to be the god of the present age. His wife tries to bring about a reconciliation, but he no longer has either hope or the will to live. His wife throws herself out of the window and when her body is brought in, Hinkemann prepares a noose with which to commit suicide. "Warum trifft es mich, gerade mich ?" he asks. "Wahllos trifft es . . . Was wissen wir ? Woher ? . . . Wohin ?" It is the tragedy, intensified to the extreme limit, of the man returned from the War to find himself estranged from the rest of humanity.

When these works are considered as typical manifestations of the state of mind produced by the events of 1914 to 1923 they are as terrible an accumulation of documents as it would be possible to collect.

The most important dramatic work of this period is to be found in three trilogies by Fritz von Unruh, Franz Werfel and Georg Kaiser respectively.

The literary career of von Unruh has been rather out of the ordinary. He sprang from an aristocratic family with a long tradition of service to the throne as high officials or army officers, and was, as has already been mentioned, an officer of Uhlans. When he was a cadet, eight years of age, he is said to have been put under arrest for referring to a sunset as "wunderschön," it being argued that expressions in use in girls' boarding-schools were not suitable in the mouth of a future officer. His two pre-war plays *Offiziere* and *Louis Ferdinand* are in the old tradition. The production of the latter was prohibited in 1913, but in the same year von Unruh was awarded the Kleist prize. During the War the three works *Vor der Entscheidung*, *Opfergang* and *Ein Geschlecht* were prohibited by Army

General Headquarters. In 1920, von Unruh was nominated by Gerhart Hauptmann, as president of the Schiller prize committee, for the Schiller prize, but the nomination was rejected by the Prussian Minister of Culture.

Von Unruh's conception of duty to the monarch, or to military superiors, which is the inspiration of the earlier plays, where it is shown in conflict with the personality of his characters, underwent a fundamental change. It became transformed into the conception of duty to one's fellow-men. The germ of the change is seen in the "dramatic poem" *Vor der Entscheidung*, written as early as the autumn of 1914, and in the trilogy, von Unruh attempts to give dramatic form to his inward experience, with his hatred of war and his idea of the new era that is to come. Only the first two parts of the trilogy have so far appeared. The first part, written in the field in 1915 and 1916, is called *Ein Geschlecht*, the second part, finished in 1920, is called *Platz*. In the former, which is regarded as the most powerful war drama in contemporary German literature, the characters are all types; the mother who defends the existing order though she protests against war, the unbalanced daughter, the eldest son, imbued with the life-force and fretting against traditional restrictions, the cowardly son, and the youngest son who is still immature. This family—the mother, the daughter and the sons—is a microcosm of the human race.

The scene is at the entrance to a graveyard on the top of a mountain during a war. The whole scene takes place between night and morning. In the valley a battle is raging, while in the cemetery the mother is burying one of her four sons who has been killed in the fight. With her are her daughter and her youngest son. Her two other sons appear under the escort of soldiers. The eldest son has attempted to violate a woman, the cowardly son has refused to fight. They are tied to the cemetery gate and the youngest son is taken away by the soldiers to be steeled in battle. Between the eldest son and the two women there is a violent scene. The son's nerves have been unstrung by the war and he manifests a forbidden love towards his own sister, who reciprocates his desire and loosens his bonds. He reproaches their mother, their dead father, religion, law, everything which has hitherto been held sacred. He protests against the setting up of his father as an idol for him to worship, until he hurled the idol down and strode on over its ruins. He despises the mothers who say they wish they had more sons to sacrifice for the fatherland. "I must go," he says, "where truth prevails, and falsehood no longer like a slug draws its slime over the purest of my impulses." The mother defends the existing order, but also apostrophises all mothers to mobilise against the madness of war. When the morning dawns, the eldest brother tears the cross from his brother's grave and then hurls himself from the wall to his death. Soldiers approach with news of victory; they pay homage to the dead soldiers in the cemetery, but prepare to drag away the corpse of the eldest son. The mother tries to prevent this and tears his baton, the symbol of authority, from the hands of one of the officers. She announces the coming of a new generation that will make a more worthy use of the staff,

and then is killed in a struggle. The soldiers revolt and, led by the youngest son, rush down into the valley. The cowardly son is freed by one of the officers, because he is not worthy to die, but the other officer, uncertain whether the revolting soldiers can be restrained, begins to doubt the blessings of war. He throws away his red cloak, the symbol of war and its horrors, to be bleached by the sun of a new day.

The youngest son and this second officer foreshadow the new era. The conflict in the poet's soul between his earlier conception of duty and his newly-won realisation of man's duty to mankind is solved in favour of the latter. The new humanity of the future is to be held above the narrower conception of nationality. But though von Unruh has a clear consciousness of what he hates and wishes to destroy in the old system, he has no clear view of what he wants to take its place. Yet he does sincerely believe in a better future. The sufferings of the War are to be justified only if a new humanity is to be the result, and in the second part of the trilogy von Unruh tries to come to closer grips with his Utopian ideal. Unfortunately his creative power is not equal to the passion and enthusiasm which fill him. His characters are too abstract, incorporated ideas, lacking in the flesh and blood necessary for the stage. There is too much declamation, and it is a fault common to most of the expressionist dramatists that they talk glibly of humanity but have not succeeded in creating a plausible human being. The characters of expressionist drama have been compared to the rather wooden medieval drawings, with balloons issuing from their mouths to denote what they say. The dramatists overestimate the intellect, but at the same time they put forth their ideas in an emotional, ecstatic manner which is unsuitable for the presentation of abstract conceptions.

The scene of *Platz* is in a square surrounded by government buildings. Most of the characters are given names, which are for the most part symbolic. The youngest son is Dietrich, the commandant is called Graf Gutundblut, a profiteer whose opportunism permits him to adapt himself to all changes is called Christlieb Schleich, and the daughters of the ruler of the state are Irene and Hyazinte. The action is involved and fantastic. The hero of the piece is Dietrich, now no longer the tempestuous revolutionary who seeks his ends by political means. He has undergone an inner transformation, his ideal has moved on to a higher and more abstract plane. He sees in Irene ("peace") a symbol of the future. Humanity is to be regenerated by a new relationship between man and woman. But the action is still insufficiently plastic, the characters still abstract types. In *Ein Geschlecht* the poet's inward experience has obviously been poured hot and glowing into dramatic form, but *Platz* is too much a product of the intellect and fails to achieve the immediate appeal of the earlier play. Neither is the thought particularly clear, and it is not obvious whether Dietrich rejects the revolution and democracy for Irene's sake or not. When von Unruh is unable to fall back on immediate experience, his inventive talent is too weak to hide the creaking of the mechanism. The

work is pervaded with the idea of the regenerating power of love, but this has not prevented von Unruh from inserting incidents where eroticism assumes the form of macabre perversion.

The unpublished, and perhaps unwritten, third part of the trilogy is called *Dietrich*, and is to solve the problem of the new humanity which has not been solved in the first two parts. It is doubtful, at this stage, whether von Unruh possesses the staying power to round the trilogy off with the third part. He is a visionary, and as has been shown by his recent tactless book of travel-sketches, *Flügel der Nike*, based on a very short stay in France and a few days in England, he is rather out of touch with reality. The more radical minds in Germany consider that von Unruh's pacifism does not accept the logical consequences; that it is too abstract and lacking in a clear understanding of the facts, a view with which the English reader of *Flügel der Nike* is inclined to agree.

Franz Werfel's trilogy, which was first performed in the autumn of 1921, is called *Spiegelmensch*. It illustrates Werfel's view of the double nature of man, the two conflicting aspects of the Ego upon which much of his poetry is based. In the young Goethe it was the emotion and the reason, in Werfel it is the higher and the lower self. Thamal, the chief character, retires, wearied with life, to a monastery where the abbot explains to him that he is not yet ripe to shun the world. He must first experience it. When Thamal is left alone his glance falls on his reflection in a mirror; he is overcome by a feeling of repulsion and shoots at the reflection, thereby releasing from the smashed mirror Spiegelmensch, his other Ego, the incorporation of his lower instincts. Spiegelmensch becomes his constant companion, his Mephistopheles, and together they set forth into the world. With every new act of guilt committed by Thamal, Spiegelmensch gains more strength. They go to the house of Thamal's father, whom Thamal kills by the mere wish. Eventually Thamal and Spiegelmensch reach the country ruled by Ananthas, the serpent demon, the embodiment of all evil. Ananthas is conquered by Thamal who, at the urging of Spiegelmensch, allows himself to be deified by the people. This is a triumph for Spiegelmensch, that a noble deed should be followed by vanity and the lust for power. Spiegelmensch now thinks that he has turned the tables and can treat Thamal as his servant. In the third part of the trilogy, Thamal separates from his companion and after various adventures delivers himself voluntarily for trial. He takes upon himself full responsibility for his misdeeds, and utters his own fatal sentence, in spite of the efforts of Spiegelmensch to entice him again by visions of power, pleasure and the fear of death. He drinks a cup of poison which delivers him from his double, who steps back into the mirror. Thamal finds himself back in the monastery, and the mirror he now sees as a window, through which he looks out into a higher life.

There is an obvious resemblance to Goethe's *Faust* and to Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*, to say nothing of Grillparzer's *Der Traum ein Leben*. Thamal has by his various adventures and experiences to arrive at a realisation of

his higher self. The piece has many faults ; the metaphysical ideas are too much in evidence, the construction is sketchy, but the effect on the stage is nevertheless impressive. Werfel's work is that of a profounder mind and a richer imagination than that of von Unruh, who poses questions but does not succeed in solving them. Werfel's work is more tangible, and he achieves a synthesis of emotion and intellect which in von Unruh appear to work separately.

Werfel calls his play a " magic trilogy." Kaiser's trilogy is of a very different kind. It is a tragedy of capitalism, of the curse of money, a subject which had already been treated in *Von Morgens bis Mitternachts*.

The first part is called *Die Koralle* and the other two *Gas*, parts one and two, and Kaiser shows, in the fate of a gigantic gas factory and its workers during successive generations, how the masses prefer to keep their necks to the yoke, and are prepared to crucify their would-be saviour. They prefer to remain slaves to the machines.

Ernst Toller has also tried to express the tragedy of capitalist civilisation in *Masse Mensch* and *Die Maschinenstürmer*. In the former play, it is a woman who leads the people and ultimately sacrifices herself for them. In *Die Maschinenstürmer*, which has as its theme the rising of the Nottingham weavers against the introduction of machinery about a hundred years ago, Toller again presents the idea of humanity and fraternity, but both these plays suffer from overweighting with matter more suited to the political tract than to the stage. He treats men in the mass, but in *Hinkemann* he shows a distinct advance in plastic power, in the ability to create an individual, and he may be classed with Werfel and von Unruh as one of the three hopes of the German stage.

The general impression of expressionist literature is that it is feverish and morbid, intensely impatient, chaotic, but fundamentally idealistic. It was too near the War and the Revolution to be anything but subjective. The War and the subsequent period were treated ecstatically, and the time has not yet come when sufficient distance has been gained for objective, or even satiric treatment. Expressionist literature reveals the anguish of the German soul, and the only literature with which it can be compared in this respect is that of Russia, which also tends to treat man in the mass.

The pessimism which appears to darken nearly all the imaginative writing of this time has reference only to the past and the present. With regard to the future it is fundamentally optimistic, even though this optimism is not based on very sound premises. The purpose is vague, and as Germans always need an intellectual purpose and a spiritual leader, the blind groping in an atmosphere of chaos was bound to give place before long to a more tangible aim and a definite direction.

The cry for a New Objectivity is already heard in the land. The post-Expressionist painters and writers are tired of types, abstractions and symbols, and are seeking a New Reality. They are still in the stage of setting up programmes, but it is to be hoped that the inspiration will endure long enough for the production of works of art.

BIBLIOGRAPHIES OF MODERN AUTHORS

No. II : EDWARD THOMAS

Part II : Prose (contd.)

SELECTIONS

CLOUD CASTLE

- 1922 Cloud Castle | and other Papers | By Edward Thomas | With a Foreword by W. H. Hudson | [device] | London : Duckworth & Co. | 3, Henrietta Street, Covent Garden

Demy 8⁰ ($8\frac{7}{16}" \times 5\frac{7}{16}"$), [a]⁴ 1—12⁸ 13⁴, pp. viii + 198 ; h.t.[i] ; advts. of books by E. Thomas and W. H. Hudson [ii] ; t.[iii] ; "First published in 1922. All rights reserved. Printed in Great Britain" [iv] ; "Foreword" v—vi ; Contents vii ; bl.[viii] ; section title [1] ; bl.[2] ; text 3—197 ; imprint of Billing and Sons 198.

Blue cloth boards, [stamped blind] on front cover, lines 1—4 of title, on back cover, device in left bottom corner ; on the back [in gilt] Cloud | Castle | and. | other | Papers | Edward | Thomas [at the bottom] Duckworth ; edges uncut ; wove paper. (7s. 6d.)

ESSAYS OF TO-DAY AND YESTERDAY

- 1926 Essays of | To-day and Yesterday [thick and thin rule with ornt. at the end under line 2] Edward | Thomas | [device] | George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd. | London Calcutta Sydney

Fcap. 8⁰ ($6\frac{3}{16}" \times 4\frac{9}{16}"$), [A]—D⁸, pp. 64 ; h.t. "Edward Thomas" [1] ; advt. of the series [2] ; t.[3] ; "First published 1926" and the imprints of the publisher and of the printer, Spottiswoode, Ballantyne & Co. [4] ; Introductory Note, signed F.H.P. 5—6 ; Contents, with sources [7] ; bl.[8] ; text 9—60 ; Bibliography [61] ; bl.[62—64].

Black paper wrapper, on the front cover a buff label bordered by a thick orange line curved at the corners ; [in black] Essays of To-Day | and Yesterday [in blue] [ornt.] Edward | Thomas ; top cut, other edges uncut ; laid paper. (1s.) Note : "Rain," the third of the eight essays in this volume was also reprinted as the single example of E. Thomas's work in "*Essays of To-Day Selected by F. H. Pritchard*" (on pp. 167—176), fcap. 8⁰, pp. 259 ; The Harrap Library, Harrap, 1923 (3s. 6d. to 7s. 6d.), and in Harrap's Modern English Series 1923. (2s. 6d.)

- 1926 [Title and collation as above] ; the same sheets were bound in antique dermatoid, the front cover having an ornamental border in blue and gold enclosed by gilt rules [at the top] Edward | Thomas | [at the bottom] Essays of To-Day | and Yesterday [along the back] Edward Thomas ; top tinted brown ; brown end-papers. (2s. 6d.)

CHOSEN ESSAYS

- 1926 Chosen Essays | By Edward Thomas | [portrait] The Gregynog Press | MCMXXVI

Cr. 4⁰ ($9\frac{9}{16}" \times 7\frac{7}{16}"$), [a]⁴ [a]—o⁴ [p]⁴ [not signing C], 4 leaves + [viii] + 104 pp. + 4 leaves ; bl. 4 leaves, the first being pasted to the end-paper ; h.t. [i] ; bl. [ii] ; t. [iii] ; bl. [iv] ; acknowledgments [v] ; bl. [vi] ; list of contents with

ABBREVIATIONS :

bl. = blank

t. = title

device = publishers' device

The published price of the book appears at the end of each collation.

h.t. = half-title ; where this is the same as the title it is not given.

ornt. = ornament

|| = rule

8⁰ = octavo 4⁰ = quarto

(a) (b) = successive editions

The author wishes to offer thanks to Mr. Ernest Rhys, Messrs. Blackie & Son, Ltd., and George G. Harrap & Sons, Ltd.

sources [vii] ; bl. [viii] ; text [1]—102 ; a note that the volume was selected by Ernest Rhys and completed at the Gregynog Press August 7th. 1926, the names of the wood engravers R. A. Maynard and H. W. Bray and of those concerned with the presswork, beneath is given a design in blue and then that the edition is of 350 copies [103] ; bl. [104] ; bl. 4 leaves, the last pasted to the end-paper. Blue levant morocco boards, both covers stamped with double rules in black to form a design in squares with a gilt ornt. where these lines intersect, and in the centre two squares enclosed by nine gilt rules which form concentric squares ; on the back between the bands five rectangles enclosed by a black and a gilt line, the sixth rectangle (second in position) is enclosed by a black line [in gilt] Chosen | Essays | by | Edward | Thomas, at the top and bottom the black rules are extended to enclose a rectangular space within which are two gilt ornts. ; the edges of the leather on the inside of the covers have two gilt rules, and the edges of the covers have one gilt rule ; gilt top, other edges uncut ; blue-grey endpapers ; English hand-made paper ; 50 copies. (four and a half guineas).

- 1926 [title as above] ; collation as above except that two leaves precede [a], namely [a]², and similarly there are two blank leaves at the end. Blue buckram boards, on the front cover a gilt ornt. in the centre, [along the back] Chosen Essays by Edward Thomas ; uncut edges ; Van Gelder paper ; 300 copies. (25s.)

BOOKS EDITED

THE POEMS OF JOHN DYER

- 1903 The Poems of John Dyer. Edited by Edward Thomas, Author of "Horæ Solitariae." London. T. Fisher Unwin. . . . 1903. The Welsh Library. Edited by Owen Edwards.
Fcap. 8^o, pp. 126. The Introduction, on pp. 7-14 is by E. Thomas. Blue cloth boards.
In the Everyman Library, J. M. Dent & Co., the following volumes, in fcap. 8^o were edited by Edward Thomas.
- 1903 No. 151 : The Bible in Spain by George Borrow (Introduction, pp. vii-xii).
- 1908 No. 309 : The Temple and A Priest to the Temple by George Herbert (Introduction, pp. vii-xii).
- 1909 No. 383 : The Plays and Poems of Christopher Marlowe (Introduction, pp. vii-xv).
- 1911 No. 517 : Words and Places and Illustrations of History, Ethnology and Geography. By Isaac Taylor (Introduction, pp. vii-xi).
- 1912 Nos. 638, 629 : Rural Rides (2 vols.). By William Cobbett. (Introduction, pp. vii-xi).
- 1914 No. 697. The Zinçali. An Account of the Gipsies of Spain. By George Borrow (Introduction, pp. vii-viii).

THE POCKET BOOK OF POEMS AND SONGS

- 1907 The | Pocket Book | of | Poems and Songs | for the Open Air | Compiled by | Edward Thomas | " You never enjoy the earth aright until the sun itself | floweth through your veins, | till you are clothed with the | heavens and crowned with the stars, and perceive yourself | to be the sole heir of the whole world." | London | E. Grant Richards | 1907
Fcap. 8^o (6 $\frac{7}{16}$ " $\times$ 3 $\frac{7}{8}$ "), A⁸⁺² + B-Y⁸ [the fifth leaf of A is signed A₂, the fifth and sixth leaves being a pair inserted in the middle of the eight leaves], pp. xx+336 ; h.t. lines 1-4 of the title [i] ; publishers' advts. [ii] ; t. [iii] ; bl. [iv] ; " For Helen " [v] ; bl. [vi] ; " Note by the Compiler " vii-x ; Contents xi-xix ; bl. [xx] ; section-title [1] ; bl. [2] ; text 3-334 ; imprint of William Brendon and Son [335] ; bl. [336].

Blue cloth boards, decorated in gilt with vertical lines forming twelve narrow panels on each cover, three on the back ; on the front cover a sprinkling of leaves to the left, an oblong panel with rounded corners to the right [within it] The | Pocket | Book of | Poems | & Songs | for the | Open Air ; on the back [within a panel as on the front cover] The | Pocket | Book | of | Poems | and | Songs | [within a panel at the bottom] E. Grant Richards ; gilt edges ; two coloured illustrations, signed W. Hyde, on the end-papers ; wove paper. (4s., "in leather" 7s.)

BRITISH COUNTRY LIFE

- 1907 [general title] British Country Life | in Spring and Summer | The Book of the Open Air Edited by | Edward Thomas | Author of '*Horæ Solitariae*,' 'Oxford,' 'Beautiful Wales,' | 'The Heart of England,' and Editor of 'The | Pocket Book of Poems and Songs | for the Open Air' | Hodder and Stoughton | London MCMVII

[title] The Book of the | Open Air [Edited by | [lines 4-10 as lines 4-10 above] Two vols, demy 4⁰ (11 $\frac{5}{8}$ " × 7 $\frac{3}{8}$ ")

Vol. 1. [a]⁸ [b]⁴ [b consists of three leaves] 1-17⁸ 18⁴ + one leaf + frontispiece, pp. xiv + viii + 240 [+2] ; general title [i] ; bl. [ii] ; Contents iii-vi ; Illustrations vii-viii ; Open-Air Diary ix-xiv ; h.t. The Book of the | Open Air [i] ; bl. [ii] ; t. [iii] ; bl. [iv] ; Introduction v-vii ; bl. [viii] ; section-t. [1] ; bl. [2] ; text 3-239 ; bl. [240] ; for duplicate pages 239-40 see note. (8s. 6d.)

Note: There is a leaf marked in MS "duplicate" on its recto which is p. 239 ; its verso is p. 240 and is the same as p. 1 of vol. 2.

- [1908] Vol. 2 [general title as in Vol. 1 substituting "in Autumn and Winter" for line 2 and for l. 10 "Publishers London"] ; [a]⁸ 1-17⁸ 18⁴ + frontispiece, pp. xvi + 240 ; h.t. ll. 1-2 of general title [i] ; bl. [ii] ; general title [iii] ; bl. [iv] ; Contents v-viii ; Illustrations ix-x ; Open-Air Diary xi-xvi ; text 1-240. Green cloth boards, on the front cover [a red rose and dark-green leaves within a rectangular rule border in dark-green] [in gilt] British [a rose as on the left] Country Life | [in dark-green] in Autumn | & Winter [on left and right of ll. 3-4 a panel of sycamore leaves, and beneath l. 4 a panel of a country scene] | Edited . . . By | Edward Thomas | [a rose as above] ; on the back [in gilt] || British | Country | Life | in Autumn | & Winter || [a tree design in green and red] || [in dark green] Hodder & Stoughton [gilt rule] ; top cut, other edges trimmed ; end-papers a green check design ; wove paper ; the coloured illustrations are pasted on to grey drawing-paper. (8s. 6d.)

Notes: (a) The collation of Vol. 1 above is from the British Museum copy, bound in the Museum from the parts whose covers are included at the back of the volume. But there are differences in the collation of this volume from that issued by the publishers in their own binding. I give them from a copy lent me courteously by Mr. John W. Haines.

(1) The Preliminaries contain ten leaves, probably an eight with a two inserted [2] +xiv +v + [viii] pp.

(2) The h.t., The book of the | Open Air ([1], verso bl. [2]) precedes the frontispiece and the general title. There is no title as on [iii] above, and the first page of the Introduction is thus paged with an unexplained V.

(3) There is no "duplicate" page at the end.

(4) The binding is an apple-green, it is light-green in Vol. 2.

(b) Four chapters in these two volumes were contributed by Edward Thomas, namely Introduction I. pp. v-vii ; Gilbert White II. xviii, pp. 86-94 ; Richard Jefferies II. xxiv, pp. 127-136 ; Some Country Books II. xxxvi, pp. 196-200.

SOME BRITISH BIRDS

- 1908 Some British Birds. Edited by Edward Thomas. With twelve illustrations in colour. Hodder and Stoughton . . . London Cr. 4⁰, pp. viii + 183. "Printed in 1908" is given on p. [ii].

BRITISH BUTTERFLIES

- 1908 British Butterflies and other Insects. Edited by Edward Thomas. Illustrated. Hodder and Stoughton . . . London
Cr. 4⁰, pp. viii+128. "Printed in 1908" is given on p. [iv].

THE HILLS AND THE VALE

- 1909 The Hills and the Vale. By Richard Jefferies. With an introduction by Edward Thomas. London: Duckworth & Co. . . . 1909
Cr. 8⁰, pp. 312. The Introduction is on pp. ix-xxi.

THE POCKET GEORGE BORROW

- 1912 [ll. 2 and 8 in red] The Pocket | George Borrow | Passages chosen from the Works of Borrow | by | Edward Thomas | London | Chatto & Windus | 1912
Demy 16⁰ ($5\frac{3}{16}" \times 3\frac{5}{16}"$), [a]⁶ A-M⁸ N², pp. xii+196 [paged at the bottom]; h.t. "George Borrow" [i]; advt. "Authors for the Pocket" [ii]; t. [iii]; "All rights reserved" [iv]; "To my brother Julian" v; bl. [vi]; Note, on the aims of the anthology vii; "Borrow's Writings" [viii]; Contents [indicating sources] ix-xii; text 1-191; bl. 192; "Alphabetical Index" 193-[196]; imprint of Billing and Sons [196].
Blue cloth boards, both covers bordered by a blind rule, in gilt [on the front cover, within an ornamental line] G.B., on the back, The | Pocket | George | Borrow || [line of ornaments || Chatto & | Windus; gilt top, other edges trimmed; wove paper. (2s.; leather 3s.)

THIS ENGLAND

- 1915 [row of ornts.] This England | An Anthology | from her writers | Compiled by | Edward Thomas [ornt.] Oxford University Press | Humphrey Milford | London New York Toronto Melbourne | and Bombay | 1915
Fcap. 8⁰ ($6\frac{3}{4}" \times 4\frac{1}{2}"$), [A]⁶ B-M⁸ N² [signing second leaves from B-M], pp. xii+180; t. [i]; imprint of the Oxford University Press [ii]; Note on the compilers' aims [iii]; acknowledgments [iv]; Contents [v]-ix; "List of Authors" [x]-xii; text 1-177; [ornt. in the centre of the page] [178]; bl. [179-180].
Green cloth boards, both covers and top and bottom of the back bordered by a double blind rule, in gilt [on the front cover] This England | An Anthology | ornt., [on the back] This England | An | Anthology [at the bottom] Oxford; top cut, other edges trimmed; wove paper. (3s.)
Note: The earliest publication of any of the poems was in this volume, "Haymaking" and "The Manor Farm" being printed on pp. 111-112.

WINDSOR CASTLE

ADDENDUM

- 1910 Windsor Castle | Described by Edward Thomas | Pictured by E. W. Haslehurst | [illus.] Blackie and Son Limited | London Glasgow and Bombay | 1910
Med. 8⁰ ($8\frac{1}{16}" \times 6\frac{1}{2}"$), 1-3⁸ 4⁴, pp. 56; t. [i]; "Beautiful England," and advt. of the series [2]; List of [12] illustrations [3]; bl. [4]; text 5-56.
Mole-grey paper boards, [in green] on the front cover, Windsor Castle [coloured illus. pasted on a green mount] Pictured by Ernest Haslehurst | Described by Edward Thomas; [along the back] Windsor Castle; edges cut; wove paper. (2s.)
- 1925 Third impression; collation as above, omitting the date on the title. (2s. 6d.)

WALTER PATER

- 1913 Walter Pater | A Critical Study | By | Edward Thomas | London | Martin Secker | Number Five John | Adelphi | MCMXII |
Demy 8⁰ ($8\frac{1}{16}" \times 5\frac{1}{16}"$), [A]-O⁸ P⁴+6 leaves, pp. 232+12 pp. advts.; h.t. "Walter Pater" [i]; publisher's advts. [2]; t. [3]; bl. [4]; "To Joseph

Conrad" [5]; a note on extracts and sources [6]; Contents [7]; bl. [8]; text 9-[232]; imprint of William Brendon & Son [232]; advts. [1]-[xii]. Dark blue cloth boards, the front cover bordered by a double gold rule, in gilt [at the top] Walter · Pater | A · Study · by | Edward · Thomas [orn't.], [on the back] [double rule] Walter | Pater | · Edward | Thomas | [at the bottom] Martin Secker [double rule]; gilt top, other edges uncut; laid paper. (7s. 6d.)

CONTRIBUTIONS, OTHER THAN REVIEWS, TO PERIODICALS

- 1895 *The New Age*
Winds of Winter. By Philip Edward Thomas. Vol. III, no. 62, p. 162, December 12, 1895.
- 1900 *Atlantic Monthly* (Boston)
to
1903 Two Scholars, Vol. 86, pp. 96-99, July 1900.
Recollections of November, Vol. 88, pp. 696-700, November 1901.
February in England, Vol. 89, pp. 209-213, February 1902.
Autumn Thoughts, Vol. 90, pp. 354-360, September 1902.
Reading Out of Doors, Vol. 92, pp. 275-277, August 1903.
- 1910 *English Review*
to
1915 Snow and Sand, Vol. 4, pp. 393-398, February 1910.
July, Vol. 5, pp. 608-616, July 1910.
Swansea Village, Vol. 17, pp. 316-324, June 1914.
Tipperary, Vol. 18, pp. 349-360, October 1914.
It's a Long, Long Way, Vol. 19, pp. 85-92, December 1914.
England, Vol. 20, pp. 88-99, April 1915.
Rupert Brooke, Vol. 20, pp. 325-328, June 1915.
- 1909 *Nation*
to
1912 A Late Adventure, June 5, 1909, pp. 346-7.
The Flower-Gatherer, September 25, 1909, pp. 913-4.
Milking, October 30, 1909, pp. 191-2.
Hawthornden, April 16, 1910, pp. 82-3.
Olwen, May 21, 1910, pp. 275-7.
The Artist, June 25, 1910, pp. 453-4.
A Group of Statuary, July 16, 1910, pp. 558-60.
Barque d'Amour, September 3, 1910, pp. 798-9.
The Attempt, November 5, 1910, pp. 229-30.
The House with the Verandah, March 11, 1911, p. 963.
The Time Deposit, August 12, 1911, pp. 703-5.
The Friend of the Blackbird, October 14, 1911, pp. 91-3.
The Fear of Death, October 5, 1912, pp. 13-14.
This England, November 7, 1914, pp. 170-171.
- 1910 *The Tramp* (The Adelphi Press, 11, Adam Street, W.C.)
The North-West Wind, March 1910, pp. 88-9.
Great Possessions, April 1910, pp. 179-184.
The Castle of Lostermellyn, June 1910.
- 1910 *The Odd Volume*
William H. Davies, A Note. pp. 15-16.
- 1911 *The Open Window* (Locke Ellis, 18, Whitcomb Street, Leicester Square, W.C.)
The Jolly Drover, Vol. 1, pp. 338-348, March 1911.

1911 *Fry's Magazine*

Chalk Pits as "Traveller's Rests." Illustrated by Bernard C. Gotch. October 1911, pp. 72-79.

In the Crowd at Goodwood. Illustrated by Arthur Watts. July 1911, pp. 413-419.

1913 *T.P.'s Weekly*
to

1914 How I Began. January 31, 1913, p. 131. [See under 1917].

Glamorgan: The Microcosm of Wales, May 9, 1913, p. 591.

W. H. Hudson, May 1, 1914, p. 553.

The Cuckoo, May 8, 1914, p. 587.

John Clare, Poet and Agricultural Labourer, June 5, 1914, p. 721.

Midsummer, June 26, 1914, p. 816.

A Modern Herrick. The Lyrics of Charles Dalmon, July 11, 1914, p. 43.

[July 11 is on this page misprinted as July 6.]

Note: An extract from this article is printed as a 'foreword' to *A Poor Man's Riches*. . . By Charles Dalmon. Methuen, 1922 (pp. vii-x).

1917 *To-Day* (Edited by Holbrook Jackson, 10, Adam Street, W.C.2)

Edward Thomas, [A memorial tribute arranged by the Editor who prefaces a brief note to "The Beginning of a Writer" ("an autobiographical extract written at my request and originally published in 1913"). There follow "A Personal Recollection" by Duncan Williams and "Edward Thomas at Oxford" by Norman G. Brett James.] May 1917, pp. 104-110.

GWENDOLEN MURPHY

CORRESPONDENCE

NAPOLEON

(To the Editor of THE LONDON MERCURY)

SIR,—If Mr. Schofield's letter on Napoleon is meant to insinuate genially that "truth" in history is unattainable I am much inclined to agree with him. What is truth? said jesting Pilate. The *ignorance modeste et savante*, which Gibbon praised, is perhaps the safest and wisest attainment to hope. Still, there are some facts, many alleged facts and infinite opinion in history, and history at its worst (or best) is a very superior sort of fiction.

Mr. Schofield is a non-expert on Napoleon; so am I, probably less expert than he is. Yet I think I see how one might go about to become an expert, *i.e.*, to know exactly what is to be known and to distinguish facts from opinions. Mr. Schofield mixes up all the evidence, or rather confounds the evidence with comment and conjecture and wilful or unconscious misrepresentation. One would group the documents roughly as first-, second- and third-hand evidence with numerous sub-divisions. In the first would come State documents of all the countries concerned, despatches, Napoleon's letters, speeches, decrees, bulletins, army orders; and one would attempt to "criticise" these by determining first their authenticity, then their purpose and sincerity. (For instance, a proclamation for effect would be distinguished from secret and peremptory orders issued on the same occasion; yet the proclamation would be valuable as showing Napoleon's methods of duping men, thereby throwing a reflex light on his character.) The second-hand documents would include all the memoirs and notes of those who knew Napoleon personally and "reported" him. Here a still greater degree of critical caution would be needed for the reasons I indicated in my article. At third-hand would come the "serious" historians. I should suppose one would study writers like Sorel and Dr. Holland Rose more attentively than, say, Michelet and Taine, and take in authors like M. Faure and M. Suarès merely for picturesque relief and the chance of some lucky stroke of insight. Doubtless it would be prudent to secure the advice and guidance of some eminent Napoleonic expert, and probably one could attend some course of lectures in a French university and follow up the publications of the *Ecole des Chartes* and (for the military side) of the French *État-Majeur*. In ten years, if one avoided "dizziness," one might have laid the foundations of an exact knowledge of the *cas Napoléon*. But life is short, and it is more important to live our own lives than to know Napoleon's. And what are the experts for? Might it not be best to choose one and follow him implicitly? This would save much time and, in the end, one would not perhaps be much less ignorant.—Yours, etc.

RICHARD ALDINGTON.

THE NATIONAL BOOK COUNCIL

(To the Editor of THE LONDON MERCURY)

SIR,—Will you allow me to call the attention of people who write, and of people who read to the very excellent bibliographies now being issued by the National Book Council?

Each deals with a particular subject, and already a large space of ground has been covered. The bibliographies vary in extent (in one, recently distributed, concerning India, information regarding over three hundred books is given) and the saving of time to anybody with special interests may be imagined. The public can receive the lists as they come out by becoming associates on payment of five shillings a year.

I am permitted to add that any additional information will be furnished by the Organising Secretary of the Council, at 30, Little Russell Street, W.C.1.—Yours, etc.

W. B. MAXWELL.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES & NEWS

Correspondence from readers on all subjects of bibliographical interest is invited. Our Correspondent will, to the best of his ability, answer all queries addressed to him.

GENERAL NOTES

I HAVE recently had the pleasure of meeting an American visitor to London whose work has several times been referred to in these notes, I mean Mr. R. S. Crane, of Chicago University, who is at present in England ; and now I have to acknowledge the receipt of two of his publications. The first of these is a reprint, from the *Philological Quarterly* for April, 1927, of Mr. Crane's *English Literature of the Restoration and Eighteenth Century : A Current Bibliography*. If I remember right this is the second annual bibliography of this kind compiled by Mr. Crane, and it provides a classified list of the books, articles, etc., relating to the English literature of the period from 1680 to 1800, published during the year 1926, together with a few items omitted from the 1925 bibliography. The list is divided into five sections, *Bibliographical Aids ; Studies dealing with Currents of Ideas and Taste, The Condition of Writers, and Literary Forms ; Studies relating to Individual Writers ; Studies relating to the Political and Social Environment ; and Studies relating to the Continental Background*. Mr. Crane, in the compilation of these bibliographies, uses a certain amount of selection, and only aims at including editions and articles that contribute something new—whether fact or idea—to their subjects. To the more important items brief reviews, sometimes by the compiler himself, sometimes by others whose identities are indicated by initials, are added ; and references are also given to important reviews which have appeared in various periodicals. The result is extremely useful, and enables one to see at a glance what work has been published during the year upon any eighteenth-century literary topic in which he may be interested ; all scholars of the eighteenth-century owe their best thanks to Mr. Crane. If I have a suggestion to make it is that, in recording books at least, he should mention their published prices. I know that this information is not always so easy to obtain as one would imagine it to be, but, even if it be not always available, I think it would prove a convenience if Mr. Crane could find space for the information in those cases in which he has it.

THE second publication is a much larger affair, an octavo volume of some two hundred pages, entitled *A Census of British Newspapers and Periodicals, 1620-1800*. This has been made by Mr. Crane in collaboration with Mr. F. B. Kaye, and "with the assistance of M. E. Prior" ; it is published at Chapel Hill, N.C., U.S.A., by the University of North Carolina Press, and the British and European agent is the Cambridge University Press. Unfortunately I have no note of the price of this book, as the copy upon which I am basing this note was sent to me as a present by the authors, and not by the publishers as a review copy. Messrs. Crane and Kaye's *Census* is first of all a census of British periodicals of which copies exist in American libraries. To this list the first hundred or so pages of the book are devoted, and in it some nine hundred and seventy periodicals—"newspapers, magazines, reviews, essay sheets in the *Spectator* tradition, annuals, etc."—are recorded, with particulars of the American libraries in which sets, or parts of sets, of them are to be found. The entries are arranged alphabetically in this list, as they are also in the second part of the book, which is a list of the periodicals (about twelve hundred in number) of which no

copies have been traced in American libraries. In this second list no locations of copies are given, and the entries are usually restricted to the short-title, place of publication (when this is other than London), and date, with sometimes the name of an author, editor, printer, or publisher. The third part of the volume is a *Chronological Index*, in which references are given to the periodicals which were known to be appearing in each year from 1620 to 1800. This seems to me an extremely useful feature, since it will enable a student, who wishes, for instance, to obtain contemporary opinions on some subject, to ascertain the names of all the periodicals which were appearing at the time of the event in which he is interested. Lastly, the fourth part of this work is a *Geographical Index of Periodicals published outside London*. This reveals to us that in the one hundred and eighty years covered by Messrs. Crane and Kaye's survey periodicals were printed in seventy-one towns in England, in two (Carmarthen and Mold) in Wales, in twelve in Scotland, in twenty-one in Ireland, in two (St. Helier and St. Peter Port) in the Channel Islands, and in three (Amsterdam, Haarlem and The Hague) in the Netherlands. Dublin seems to have been by far the most prolific town in the matter of periodicals, for it has one hundred and sixty-six to its credit, as against the second best of Edinburgh, which has only one hundred and four. After these two towns come Bristol with twenty-seven, Cork with twenty-six, Glasgow with twenty-two, and Newcastle-upon-Tyne with twenty-one. Lower than these is a group of towns with twelve or fifteen entries apiece—York, Oxford, Norwich, Manchester, Exeter, and Bath—and it is worth noticing that in this group we come upon our first University town, Oxford, which has fifteen periodicals. Cambridge is even further down with five entries, and Durham has only one—the *Durham Courant*, which was in existence in 1736, though when it began or ended is not known to the compilers of this *Census*. University journalism is evidently, therefore, a modern growth. Perhaps not unnaturally, one of the things for which I looked, in turning over the pages of this book, was information as to what earlier *London Mercuries* had existed. I found several of them. The first was a *London Mercury* of which two numbers, dated January 6 and 27, 1669, are recorded. There were other *London Mercuries* in 1682 and 1692, the latter of which was written by Thomas Brown. There was the *London Mercury*; or, *Moderate Intelligence* (horrid title!) which was later altered (by a stroke of astonishing prevision) to the *London Mercury*; or, *The Orange Intelligence*; this was a semi-weekly which appeared in 1688 and 1689. There was the *London Mercury, published for the promotion of trade*, in 1695-97, and the *London Mercury*; or, *Mercure de Londres* (an elegant title that!) of which the first number (no record of a second number exists) appeared on June 3, 1696. Then came the *London Mercury*; or, *Great Britain's Weekly Journal*, which made its bow to the public on March 14, 1719; and lastly, in 1781, there was the *London Mercury, Containing the History, Politics, and Literature of England*. I fancy too that, after 1800, there was at least one other *London Mercury*, but I am not sure. But I must return to more serious matters, and record the fact that Messrs. Crane and Kaye write that "this bibliography is to be looked upon as a first draft. No work such as this can possibly reach completion in its first edition. We hope to be able in time to perfect it, and, to this end, we invite all users of these lists to send us corrections and additions, for, in cases like this, as Dr. Johnson said, 'those who can add anything . . . communicate their discoveries, and time produces what had eluded diligence.'" That is modestly and wisely written—besides being tagged with a most admirable Johnson quotation. I earnestly hope that the compilers of this *Census* will find many users of this book to assist them, and that they will, before many years are past, issue their second and enlarged edition. Is it too much to hope that in that edition

the first two parts of the book will be amalgamated and both British and American locations given wherever possible ? This would add enormously to the value of Messrs Crane and Kaye's already admirable work.

WE often hear complaints that our great libraries, and other museums, while catering adequately for scholars who know exactly what it is that they want, make no attempt to make known to the world in general the attractiveness of the collections which they possess. This exclusive outlook, this hatred of the "popular," is gradually disappearing and many great institutions issue really excellent literature aimed at the non-specialist public. Obviously, it is neither possible, nor desirable, to attract to a museum or a library people who have not latent in them an interest in literature, or science, or some such subject ; but it is possible so to write about the contents of a library or museum as to make them attractive to thousands of people whose latent interest has never been aroused. These people may never make scholars ; it is, perhaps, hardly to be desired that they should, since there is not room in the world for more than a very strictly limited number of scholars ; but they are people who are willing, even eager, to acquire general knowledge on almost any subject that makes an appeal to their intelligence, or to their sense of beauty. Among recent examples of efforts, by great institutions of scholarship, to inform and interest this general public, I may mention, as an example, the series of coloured picture-postcards of British Orchids, which is now being issued by the Natural History Museum. This series is certainly most admirably adapted to instructing ordinarily intelligent people in one beautiful and interesting class of objects with which they may well be brought into contact ; but it is more than that, for it will be, when (as it is to be hoped will be done) a card of every British species of orchid has been issued, by far the best existing set of coloured drawings of this family of plants. But what, the reader may ask, has all this talk of museums and orchids to do with bibliography ? Only this, that the whole question of the wise presentation of scientific or learned subjects to a non-technical audience has been brought to my mind by the receipt of an illustrated pamphlet, *Specimens of Shakespeariana in the Bodleian Library at Oxford*, which has just been issued, at the price of half-a-crown, by the Bodleian Library itself. This pamphlet is based upon one which was printed in 1916 in connection with the Library's Shakespeare Exhibition, which was held to commemorate the tercentenary of Shakespeare's death. The excuse—if any was needed—for the present publication was the selection of the dramatist as the central subject of this year's University Extension Meeting lectures at Oxford. The Bodleian's Shakespearean collection amounts in all to more than five-thousand-seven-hundred volumes, of which about a hundred are described in the pamphlet now before me. The Library's great strength, from the Shakespearean point of view, is that in 1821 Edmund Malone's wonderful collection was presented to it by his brother Lord Sunderlin. The Malone books contained such inestimable treasures as the only known copy of Shakespeare's first publication, the quarto *Venus and Adonis* of 1593. The Bodleian also possesses seventy quarto editions (and eleven duplicates), none of them printed later than the year 1700, of separate plays, and most of these also were Malone's. The total number of editions and issues up to 1700 seems to have been one hundred and two, so the Bodleian's seventy is obviously a remarkable number to possess, especially as more than thirty of them are early quartos—books, that is, printed before the issue of the first folio of 1623. Sir Thomas Bodley, as readers of his letters to his librarian, Dr. James, will remember, had a great belief that plays and poems and such-like "baggage books" were beneath the dignity of his library ; otherwise the Bodleian's

present riches would probably be even greater than they are, for James clearly had a desire to admit more plays than his founder approved of. As things were, the earliest Shakespearean book admitted to the Library was the first folio, which came to the University in sheets on publication, and was bound by William Wildgoose for the Library. After the third folio appeared in 1663-4 this copy of the first folio was sold as a duplicate—with the result that when, in 1905, the University came to buy it back it cost that learned body no less than £3,000. And the moral of *that* is—too obvious to need expression. It would be easy to continue talking about this agreeable pamphlet (I refer to the *Specimens of Shakespeariana*—not to the first folio), but I must stop, after only adding that it is well printed and illustrated, and admirably suited to attract the interest of visitors to the Bodleian.

ITEMS FROM THE BOOKSHOPS AND CATALOGUES

MR. FRANCIS EDWARDS, of 83A, High Street, Marylebone, London, W.1, has just sent me his catalogue number 498. This is called *Geographia* and deals with Atlases, Maps, Sea Charts, and similar things. An interesting book in this list is a copy of the third edition, quarto, 1627, of Peter Heylyn's *A Little Description of the Great World*. This copy has on its fly-leaf a long manuscript letter of dedication from Heylyn to Sir Thomas Coventry, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal of England. For this book £50 is asked; the catalogue contains a reproduction of its title-page and of Heylyn's dedication. Another important item is a collection of fifty-two county maps of Great Britain, all of the second half of the eighteenth century or of the early nineteenth. This collection—its price is £250—was formed about the year 1810 by William Faden, the Map Publisher of Charing Cross; in it are the three earliest maps of the Ordnance Survey:—Kent, 1801; Essex, 1805; and Devon, 1809. Mr. Edwards also offers a large number of Speed's maps—both of Europe and of Great Britain.

CATALOGUES of topographical books do not seem to be quite so plentiful as they used to be. However, I have received one recently from Mr. Alfred Cooper, of 234 and 236, King Street, Hammersmith. The books contained in this list are mostly inexpensive ones, and they are grouped by counties. The largest section is that devoted to London. It hardly seems necessary to mention particularly this or that book in this list, which is Mr. Cooper's Number 110; but those who collect the books relating to any particular county, or other locality, would do well to obtain a copy of this catalogue, and see whether it will not fill some of their gaps for them.

I. A. WILLIAMS

IMP · CAES · DIVI TRAIANI · PARTI

BOOK-PRODUCTION NOTES

THE VIROCONIUM TABLET

THE inscription of the Trajan column at Rome has influenced so profoundly the character of modern lettering in England that the tablet to Trajan's successor, the Emperor Hadrian, which was recovered in fragments from the excavations at Wroxeter a few years ago, deserves special notice ; for it is a magnificent example of lettering only a little later in date. It must rank amongst the finest examples of the Roman taste for fine lettering which have survived anywhere. Nothing else like it, I believe, has ever been found in this country. A small-scale photographic reproduction of it may be seen in the *Transactions of the Birmingham Archaeological Society* for the year 1924, which has only lately been issued to members. Casts of it or at any rate photographic reproductions on as large a scale as its great size will admit (for it measures some fourteen feet wide and four high) should be made available for students of lettering in our museums and craft schools. The inscription, engraved in marble, runs as follows in letters standing from six to nine inches high :

IMP · CAES · DIVI · TRAIANI · PARTI
CI · FIL · DIVI · NERVAE · NEPOTI · TRA
IANO · HADRIANO · AVG · PONTIFI
CI · MAXIMO · TRIB · POT · XIII ·
CIVITAS · CORNOVIORUM.

The letters which I have printed in italics and also a portion of the fourth line are missing, and some of the other letters are broken. But we have here all the letters of the old Roman alphabet except K and Q. The inscription dates from about the year 129 of the present era. It was placed at the entrance of a great building which is believed to have been the forum of Viroconium.

THE "CAMPDEN" ALPHABET

I HAVE here had set up a portion of the Hadrian tablet in letters which have been designed for the Shakespeare Head Press by Mr. F. L. Griggs, A.R.A. The influence of the Trajan column may readily be traced ; and besides their manifest beauty the letters have this advantage that they range well when used as initial letters with Caslon's pica old-face. They have been cut by the Lanston Monotype Corporation and cast on the monotype for use in the edition of Froissart now being printed at the Shakespeare Head. Later on it is hoped that the letters may be cut in various sizes for the general use of printers.

HERR REICHNER ON AMERICAN PRINTING

HERR HERBERT REICHNER sends me from his address in Vienna (Tiefer Graben 19) the first number of *Bibliotheca Typographica*, a comely quarto, printed at Leipzig in Garamond type and bound in boards covered with a Fabriano paper with end-papers of the same material. It is to appear periodically ; but each part will be complete in itself and will discuss and illustrate the work of some one printer or school, or some branch in respect of printing. This first number deals with printing in the United States of America, which Herr Reichner reviews in a short introduction. He notes the great advance made in American printing of late years and recognises the encouragement given to it by the great American book-collectors, the many societies of bibliophiles—such as the Grolier Club, the Caxton Club, the Carteret Book Club, the Rowfant Club, the Club of Odd Volumes, and the Book Club of California—and the various societies, museums and public libraries which are concerned with book-production. He mentions especially the American Institute of Graphic Arts, which holds every year an exhibition of “ Fifty Books of the Year,” chosen for the interest and excellence of their production. Herr Reichner notes the “ conservatism ” of American printers, which inclines them to use revivals of old types, such as Caslon, Garamond and Bodoni, rather than to venture new flights ; but he recognises in Mr. F. W. Goudy “ der fruchtbarste Schriftkünstler ”—the most productive of type-designers, whose “ klaren und harmonischen Typen ” have spread far and wide both in Europe and in America. The number concludes with sixteen title-pages and other specimens of the work of American printers. Some of them are from books which have been noted from time to time in these pages. They include work from Mr. Bruce Rogers and Mr. Updike and from a quite considerable number of American printers who give care and study to the printing of their books. *Bibliotheca Typographica* is published in a limited edition of 200 copies at 6 marks a copy ; but subscribers to the five numbers receive a handsome discount of 25 per cent. Moreover, a reprint of Albert Dürer’s treatise in the roman alphabet, published at Nuremberg in 1525, will be reserved to subscribers.

THE “GREGYNOG ” EDWARD THOMAS

THE *Selected Poems of Edward Thomas** does not contain any of the woodcuts which give their special note of interest to some of the earlier issues of the Gregynog Press. It has, however, typographical features which show that the Press is not content to rest on its oars—or its laurels—but is striving for new features of interest and excellence in its books. The book is admirably printed in Garamond type, leaded ; and every page is enclosed within thin rules printed in blue. These are extended into the inner and outer margins, running off the trimmed fore-edge. The large and gracefully drawn initial letters are open down the middle of the thick strokes, and are printed in red. But some of them stand in the air, instead of being supported by lines of type below them, as, I conceive, initial and versal letters always should be. The Garamond section mark (§) is used freely as a decoration ; to my mind it rather detracts from the wonderful delicacy and gracefulness which in every other detail are a note of the book’s workmanship. The pages are printed on Japanese vellum of beautiful surface and great strength.

B. H. NEWDIGATE

* The Gregynog Press, Newtown, North Wales. 275 copies. 25s.

CHRONICLES

THE MOVIES

PRINCE OF ADVENTURERS. CINÉ ALLIANCE. Rialto (Trade Show).

SEVENTH HEAVEN. FOX. London Hippodrome (Trade Show).

PASSION ISLAND. PATHÉ. Marble Arch Pavilion.

Various Films : WOLVES OF THE UNDERWORLD, THE TWO BROTHERS, WHISPERING WIRES.

PUBLICITY performs many wonders, but there are moments when there seems more madness than mystery in its methods, and a critic may be tempted to save his space for other films when there are Miss Madge Titheradge and Miss Lilian Braithwaite (not to mention Lord Beaverbrook and Mr. Nares) lavish of adjectives over *Seventh Heaven* in a little book sent out by Fox Films ; while more than the proverbial due has been given to *Prince of Adventurers* when the B.B.C. allow it to be said that " its coloured scenes are so wonderful that they make the National Art Gallery look like a collection of postage stamps."

However, the coloured scenes were there, though the crudity of their tinting and the uncertainty of its control show that it is as yet unfair to criticise them. Venice was also there and so, besides much else, was Mosjoukine. He gave a brilliant exhibition, but I can never watch him without seeming to see the rehearsal behind it all, with the actor advancing and saying, "Now I come on. This is how I do it," while the subordinates hurry respectfully to the fringes of the set. Of course, he does it very well, but all the time he is *showing*, and I do not feel he is showing *his* idea of the part, but only his idea of Mr. Fairbanks or Mr. Barrymore in the part.

The story of the film is a series of love-affairs through which the prince parades. One would like to call him Casanova, but that perhaps says too much in one word, so the screen calls him " Robert Ferrara, to whom the day was but the prelude to the night, and it was nothing more." The women with whom he is intimate are skilfully chosen so that each may appeal where the others might fail, and the settings of the love-affairs are the Square St. Marc (*sic*), St. Petersburg and Austria. Human character, as part of the spectacular convention, is first simplified and then broadened, but it is a pity that the elaboration of the treatment sometimes retards even the external development of the story : the scene with the blind fiddler is an instance. Many scenes designed to be witty incidents became, in this way, heavy, and usurped the importance of scenes to which they should have led up. It is here that the film, considered as anything higher than a box-office attraction, fails. But it is only fair to say that the captions make it clear that this is the only way to regard it. *If war could have eased an aching tooth, his was the temper to have ordered two* surely belongs to the *Came the dawn, but returned no Son* era. It should have been impossible in 1926. Many of the side-scenes are attractive and ingenious, and it goes without saying that it is one of the largest " movies " made, but after seeing the picture twice, I find it leaves no impression of unity, and, even in a film of this sort, despite Bilinsky's dresses and " the ex-Russian aristocrats " who helped to make some of " the most realistic Russian Court scenes ever shown," a little more imagination would have helped.

That is why *Seventh Heaven* gave me more pleasure. In this, a sewer-man rescues a young girl from an absinthe-drinking sister. He is about to marry her when the war breaks out ; he returns blinded. There had, of course, been the usual false news that he had been killed. The acting is—I would not say better, but in a newer and, I think, more suitable style. The photography is pleasing, although what is photographed has a picturesqueness which betrays a half-realised artificiality. But despite the primitive appeal of the film, there is a certain amount of psychological development which is due to the direction of Frank Borzage. The spectator is made to know something of the people's minds as dictating their behaviour and not necessarily evidenced by it. The result is that he is prepared for their emotional floods, even if he cannot share them, and so he is on the same side of the screen as they ; he is not left sitting in his seat, thinking of what he might be seeing. It will be shown at the New Gallery in the autumn.

For technical interest, *Passion Island* repays attention. The story is not enthralling and the women of the cast are lifeless, but the treatment has several interesting devices. The way in which recognition of a voice dawns on a hearer's mind was very well done and cannot, as is right, be described as vividly as it was filmed. This, and a fight, were worthy of Ufa, which is praise, though Ufa's *Secrets of the Soul*, rich in opportunities, was rather dully treated—doubtless in the intention of providing Freud without tears. The carnival scenes of *Passion Island* captured that most difficult of atmospheres more successfully than did *Prince of Adventurers*, but the snare of arches as a compositional device proved too strong ; not sufficient use was made of them to justify their hackneyed inclusion, and it is fatal to be shamefaced over a cliché if you cannot do without it. There are many skilful twists in *Wolves of the Underworld*, a Ufa crook film, though it is possible to see through it here and there, and the dream at the end is really too old a trick. The set for the vault is in the best German style and should be compared with the meretricious cellar-scene in *Whispering Wires*, a film which sets out to atone for the neglect of the telephone in modern drama. A flimsy heroine, a bloodhound, a coloured butler and a gagged man make its ineffectiveness quite amusing, but the cellar is the peak of the fun. Conrad Veidt in *The Two Brothers*, another Ufa film, plays both parts, but has nevertheless little to do. The explosion at the beginning is good, and so is a vision of wealth, but for the rest the film follows familiar lines.

ROBERT HERRING

FICTION

TINKER'S LEAVE. By MAURICE BARING. Heinemann. 7s. 6d.

THE HAUNTED HOUSE. By HILAIRE BELLOC. Arrowsmith. 7s. 6d.

HERE WE RIDE. By ANTHONY BERTRAM. Allen & Unwin. 7s. 6d.

SOME PEOPLE. By HAROLD NICOLSON. Constable. 7s. 6d.

PRETTY CREATURES. By WILLIAM GERHARDI. Benn. 6s.

THE SHORT STORIES OF H. G. WELLS. Benn. 7s. 6d.

THE hero of Mr. Baring's story gave himself leave to live without caring as to what should happen next. Mr. Baring has given himself leave to write a story without caring as to whether what happens next has any connection in probability with what has gone before. His hero is, to begin with, frankly incredible. A young man, who is, in name if not in fact, the senior partner in an old and prospering business and who at any rate goes to his office every day, has been brought up so strictly by an aunt that, when he is twenty-seven, it takes some resolution for him to tell her that he is going to spend Easter in Paris alone. If never before, how did he come to make this spectacular breakaway at twenty-seven? But that is nothing to what follows. One evening's chance meeting with a party of Russians in Paris sends him at once not merely to Russia but actually to Manchuria to see the Russo-Japanese War. This is a little too much. Miles Consterdine is in fact only a white and empty screen set up by Mr. Baring to receive the coloured pictures of his own memories.

But, when one is not exasperated by a screen in the shape of a human being, these memories are entertaining enough. Some of them are familiar. Mr. Baring has written more than once about his Russian experiences and there seem to me to be scraps of repetition. But there is a great deal that is new, and it is all in that curious effortless style which is peculiar to its author. I like particularly the account of Miles's first night in Petrograd (in which, however, as having happened to Miles, I do not for a moment believe):

"Yes," said the night porter calmly. "They brought *them*"—he used the third person plural, which in Russian indicates respect—"twice from the police station, and I didn't recognise them, and sent them back. They were 'drink-taken,' they were unconscious, and their coat was torn. Then they took them to the back door, and Petrushka, the *dvornik* (the man who swept the back-yard), recognised them and said: 'Yes, that is our *Barin*,' ('That is our gentleman.') 'They are asleep.' ('*Oni spiat.*')"

It is a little unfortunate that Mr. Belloc's farce should end on a painful note. Lord Mere de Beurivage (formerly George Huggins) has been throughout nothing but a figure of fun, none of whose deeds or misdeeds (which strongly resemble those of Mr. Clutterbuck) is to be taken seriously. Then, to prevent him from buying Rackham "Catchings," the ancestral "ghost" visits him and reduces him to a pitiable state of physical collapse, very vigorously described. This is much as though the impersonator of Charley's aunt should inflict on himself horrible injuries by catching his foot in his skirt and falling downstairs. It is also a pity that Mr. Belloc should rely so much (and, for the most part, unnecessarily) on the threadbare trick

of ventriloquism. Indeed, the book, taken altogether, cannot be regarded as representing Mr. Belloc in his happiest mood : it is not for an instant to be compared with *Emanuel Burden* or *A Change in the Cabinet*. But there are parts of it (notably the beginning, the first fifty pages, say) which suggest an original intention of something other than farce and I could wish that the author had adhered to it.

The worst of writing about drab lives is that those who live them are apt to express themselves in a drab way. Mr. Anthony Bertram felt this in his first novel, *The Pool*, and he sought to get over it by making his heroine use altogether unlikely language. Conscious of the feeling of unreality thus produced, he has inserted into his second novel one character who is to play the part of romantic chorus for all the rest. The scene is a cheap lodging-house near King's Cross, and the chorus is an old gentleman named Ferdinand Banting, who talks, to be perfectly brutal, the most shocking nonsense. He must have got it out of books, since it is too verbose to have been derived from film captions. Here is a chunk of it :

I knew a man once, a sailor, who had been everything in his time from master of his own ship down to deck-hand on a fishing smack. He had known the sea under every sky and every wind. He had known every port in all the four corners of the earth. The world was his shipmate. When I talked to that man he was very old. He was a quartermaster then on a small trading vessel. We were in the Bay of Biscay. The sea moved across our course in wide, low rolls of lead-coloured water. There was not a breath of wind to ruffle the surface and the path of the moon was smooth and polished and ran away over the horizon like a silver road. The ship rolled as regularly as the throb of its engine. We sat on the after deck leaning against the hatch and looking along that silver road, and the man talked to me. I have never met anybody wiser or happier. He'd gathered no moss : no moss that you could put in a bank or give as a reference, anyway. But he'd ridden the silver road over a million horizons. A rolling stone gathers no moss. Pah ! What's your object in living, you ?

I have quoted this preposterous old figment at length because he embodies something that seriously threatens a promising talent. Mr. Bertram must find some way of going otherwise about it if he wants to show the romance that lies behind sordid lives : this way suggests that he has not in fact seen any native romance there, but is supplying some of his own, and poor stuff at that. Where he is less cheaply ambitious, he succeeds wonderfully. The story of Daisy, with her inefficiency, her silly day-dreams and her love of "asking advice", is, right down to its ironic climax, beautifully done. So too—in a different way—is the return home to the vicarage of Daisy's casual seducer. If Mr. Bertram could write a novel all on this level, he would have done something highly worth doing.

Some People is only formally half-way between fact and fiction: in essentials it is no different from most sorts of fiction. Dickens made a sort of portrait of his father, leaving out all that, in that connection, was not interesting, and called it Mr. Micawber : Mr. Nicolson makes the same sort of portrait of Lord Curzon and calls it Lord Curzon. Mr. Micawber is almost too good to be true : so is Mr. Nicolson's Lord Curzon. As for the valet, Arketall, I do not know whether he is fiction based on fact or merely a joyful fantasy, but he also is almost too good to be true. Then, in another story, there is Professor Malone, with whose fountain-pen so many important treaties have been signed. The starting point of this picture is unmistakable to anyone who ever knew the first original, but the finished portrait is, as it were, an essence of all journalistic experts on foreign politics. These are all caricatures, but caricature is only a particular and simplified way of looking at the truth. There is only one failure in this gallery—Mrs. Miriam Codd. Mr. Nicolson intimates that he knew all about

her as soon as she said that she was a behaviourist and an experimenter at the Harriet Putzheim Medical School, but, in effect, he keeps his delighted knowledge to himself and Mrs. Codd remains something of a private joke. But I cannot help thinking that Mr. Nicolson ought to let loose his talent for caricature in a book formally less amphibious.

The problem of Mr. Gerhardi's future seems lately to have been troubling several powerful minds. He has made life difficult for himself (and, apparently, for others) by writing a very fine first novel and a second which I should have called very fine if I had not read the first. It was in fact rather too like the second brew from the same lot of tea-leaves, though there was a beautiful (and quite incongruous) episode at the end that indicated his ability to go further. Here, in a collection of short stories, we have for the most part, more water poured into the pot and out again, faintly but not disagreeably coloured in passage. Where it is more deeply coloured, he seems to be attempting to do once again what he did at the end of *The Polyglots*—to get beyond extracting irony from the trivial and the futile. But *A Bad End*, the story of a man hanged for a murder he did not intend to commit, seems to me to be a story written in a fog. It is all on two different planes—the plane of ironic fantasy and the plane of pitying realism. Between the two neither the story nor its main character ever comes to anything and, as Mr. Gerhardi never persuades us on either plane that such a murder was ever committed or that, if it had been, such consequences could have resulted, what does it matter? I have rarely read a piece of work by a man of genius—and Mr. Gerhardi, at his best, is that—which less carried conviction of the author having convinced himself or even defined in his own mind what he intended to do. Here and there, and throughout almost the whole of one story, *The Vanity Bag*, are glimpses of the qualities with which Mr. Gerhardi delighted us before, but there is nothing successfully new.

There are sixty-three stories in Mr. Wells's collection, three of them of considerable length, and it covers practically the whole of his literary career, though the last fifteen years or so only very sparsely. *The Filting of Jane* is, I think, one of the few remaining fragments of his very earliest days; *The Grisly Folk* was written only two or three years ago. The reflection suggested by these two contrasted pieces is that once he cared to write stories, but now he prefers to give lectures with vivid illustrations. It is such a change as takes place in the development of any man's mind, and there would be no good done by regretting it, even if it were right to do so. But, turning over the eleven hundred odd pages of this volume, I cannot repress a sigh for those earlier years when Mr. Wells might have made it longer, but did not.

EDWARD SHANKS

BELLES-LETTRES

OPEN HOUSE: A BOOK OF ESSAYS. By J. B. PRIESTLEY. Heinemann. 6s.

BOUQUET. By G. B. STERN. (With illustrations and a map). Chapman & Hall. 7s. 6d.

IN PRAISE OF FRANCE. By STEPHEN GWYNN. (Illustrated). Nisbet. 10s. 6d.

THE VERDICT OF BRIDLEGOOSE. By LLEWELYN POWYS. (Limited Edition). Cape. 9s.

THE AESTHETES. By W. J. TURNER. Wishart. 4s. 6d.

MR. J. B. PRIESTLEY has now proved himself one of the Indian Jugglers. He has rehearsed in other books, he has teased us into attention when we have been bored with tragedy and fatigued with romance, he has performed and retreated under minor showers of applause ; but now we welcome him the moment his number is up and applaud reminiscently long after he is gone. We don't know, when he begins, whether we are to laugh or frown, but we shall do whichever he bids : he is the leader of the orchestra and we are all playing under his hand before the Immensities and the Irresponsibilities ; he is the Leader of the House and we shall all hurry into the Division lobby and vote as he pleases, whether we agree or not, or rather we shall all agree without question, for judgment is suspended. Only in this way of seeming extravagance and strict justice can I express the attraction of these essays ; and when, as he himself puts it, *Priestley is In*, I am sure to be pleased with some admirable placing, timing, and hard driving. In a comparison of himself with Sutcliffe he suggests a placard headed, " Priestley out of Humour. . . . May not write Essay this week " ; but it is impossible for him to be out of humour or, being out of humour, not to write a stimulating essay upon " The Sacred Bad Temper." I mean that he is able to speak freely of himself, playing variations upon the theme inexhaustibly, and in so speaking to sharpen our intelligence of ourselves and make his egotism ours :

My face would seem to belong to a type of man I dislike. It is a theatrical, temperamental affair, for ever rushing out to extremes, whereas I am all for moderation. I do not pretend to absolute philosophic calm and detachment, but—whatever my acquaintances, the deluded audience of this face, may say to the contrary—I am certainly not a man of strong feelings, one of those people who must be excited about something, who are not happy unless they are in the depth of misery or find all existence wretched because they do not feel ecstatic, who must be always yearning and burning, loving and hating, laughing and crying.

Mere unrelieved high spirits are as depressing as unrelieved low spirits, and Mr. Priestley might weary us if he were the invincible, invariable jester. I am not sure that when he uses ideas and skirts the precipice of Satire he is not best of all, for he is then able, for instance, to laugh at literary servilities and make half of us ashamed of our poor mimicry of one another, and half of us ashamed of our stiff and obstinate protestations at things not worth a protest. Is it all a trick ? No ! it is, rather, a natural exuberance, the fruit of seeing and touching common things, of brushing the normal with an intelligence, humour and expressiveness beyond the normal. Thus

there is no reason why Mr. Priestley, if he chooses, in his bright particular way should not be of those two or three essayists of our time who are born to go on for ever and whose very corpses, when the spirit is fled, will be suspiring essays from Kensal Green every Wednesday and Saturday, for electrical recording by a new and pious wizardry. Miss G. B. Stern and Mr. Stephen Gwynn have been in France and have made books of their experiences. The experiences are of the slightest, but sufficient to provoke an ecstasy in each author, and the ecstasy is provoked chiefly by the same experience in each—the tasting of wine. This is Miss Stern's whole subject, and no man need utter a superior *Psha*! at the invasion of a masculine province; indeed Miss Stern's own superiorities are sufficient to crush the vulgar who are thankful to drink what they can get. If "culture" dominates her impressions a little sharply now and then, and if we are aware that some of her superiorities are flung in our faces as her *Fiat* flies past, it is all for our good and teaches humility: can we say more? Mr. Gwynn throws the wine in with a good deal of touring: as a tourist he is more innocent than Miss Stern, but she—in wines as in style—is more epicurean. The opportunity of comparing these very attractive writers might not have been found but for the fact that both of them have touched the same ground, the home of the same wines, and both recall—with difference of gusto—the same fine careful rapture over Château Margaux and the vastness of the Rothschilds' cellars. Travelling in France, says Mr. Gwynn, is like falling in love, a voyage of discovery. He is not often so cynical, but Miss Stern is never cynical. He disdains the tourist, yet the best pages of his book are those in which he gapes tourist-like (as at Le Mans Cathedral) and makes the reader who is not afraid to be a tourist a participant in his pleasure. Seventeenth-century travellers went to gape and came back agog with news: why are we ashamed and unable to take even our ignorance lightly, but must needs dissemble and fly from a mirror? A man must be doubtful of himself when he takes to flight.

Such a man is assuredly not Mr. Llewelyn Powys. *The Verdict of Bridlegoose* is supposed to be his verdict on the United States and the American people, but it is really his verdict on himself. It is a little like Mr. W. H. Davies's autobiographical chapters, with more of force and mordancy; the work of a powerful nature and a sick mind, the work of one who can write confidently and, also, at times, querulously. Such a passage as this is memorable, not simply for itself but as the writing of a man who returns to his native land and to himself after an excursion from home and health:

To the left were downs, rising and falling, one behind the other, as far as St. Aldhelm's head. Everywhere against the skyline were visible the immemorial burial mounds of the men of the old time. I saw also in the distance the hill which I knew overlooked Corfe Castle—Corfe Castle, with its Norman keep haunted by shining jackdaws, still standing after eight hundred years, its very robeguards, the turreted drought of the medieval lords and ladies, still visible above the moat. Yet all that happened to me since I last looked for tracks outside the badger-hole in Middle Bottom, all that I had seen, and all that I had heard, had been contained, so I found, within the compass of the lifetime of a cat, of my brother's sandy cat, Peter Paul, old now, it is true, but still able to enjoy an afternoon's sleep in the long grass under the sycamore.

I walked to the very edge of the cliff and looked over. Far below, at the foot of a ledge grown with samphire, I could see a dozen foolish guillemots drying their wings in the last rays of the setting sun. On a ledge much higher up, not more, so I judged, than a hundred feet from where I was standing, a cormorant sat becking at me with its long black-green head outstretched, for all the world like Chaucer's pardoner. And because of a certain quality in that evening air, a quality nameless, absolute, indefinable, I knew that for a surety I was home once more.

The personalia in which Mr. Powys indulges himself may seem sometimes sardonic and severe, but his lightest phrases are vivid and I find myself relishing equally—out of the malice of the heart—what he says of others and what he reveals of himself.

We breathe a more difficult air in Mr. W. J. Turner's *The Aesthetes*, a Platonic dialogue on the nature of beauty. In giving it a dramatic form he has imparted to it something of the pleasant excitement, and difficulty, of a cross-word puzzle which, as you solve it in the train, makes you wish for the dictionary left at home. It is not perfectly clear, and it is hard to make clear "a conception which would be original and like all truly new and original conceptions would include what was relevant in the ideas of those who in the past have thought on the subject." His conception of æsthetics must be itself æsthetic, an idea, he says, which nobody has thought of before. I do not know precisely where æsthetics begin and end, but even if the idea is not so innovating as he thinks, it is one which Mr. Turner has borne carefully in mind in forming a lively synthesis of innumerable discussions, interspersed with satiric characters livelier still. As a test of its being alive he suggests that *The Aesthetes* be compared with Plato—an unnecessarily bold challenge. Every man, says one of the speakers in the concluding argument, every man is an artist in his own way because he has had strange experiences outside the daily business of life—"moments which came like a flash, when something hidden in them was about to change. Suddenly a sense of life ! Art is only a sense of life at the instant of creation." Stimulating things are uttered on the way to this conclusion, and if the road is more attractive than the station it is only because the station is in darkness and the porters are all exclaiming in an unknown tongue—probably Scots ; but the darkness of the station, arched in wide emptiness and resounding a strange babel-medley of obscure syllables, cannot make you forget how pleasant was the road and how vivacious the talk over the rocking glasses. With that talk still echoing you are, indeed, almost at home in the darkness and care not if no one steps forward to meet you and tell you the way to—where ?

JOHN FREEMAN

LITERARY HISTORY AND CRITICISM

CHARLES M. DOUGHTY. *A Critical Study.* By BARKER FAIRLEY. Cape. 9s.

FRANCIS THOMPSON: *The Poet of Earth in Heaven.* By R. L. MÉGROZ. Faber and Gwyer. 12s. 6d.

DOROTHY AND WILLIAM WORDSWORTH. By CATHERINE MACDONALD MACLEAN. Cambridge University Press. 6s.

THE LIGHT READING OF OUR ANCESTORS. By LORD ERNLE. Hutchinson. 15s.

AUTHORSHIP IN THE DAYS OF JOHNSON: *A Study of the Relation between Author, Patron, Publisher and Public, 1726-1780.* By A. S. COLLINS. Holden. 30s.

DOUGHTY the poet, as distinct from the author of *Arabia Deserta*, has not yet been generally recognised as a classic, but the significance of his poetical work (and its close connection with his great prose-book) is gradually dawning at any rate on some minds. The superficial (and more than superficial) forbiddingness of his poems makes it desirable that criticism should do at least some facilitating spade-work for the general reader. This is what Mr. Barker Fairley has done, and it must be recognised that he has done it well. His book is a complete and thorough-going survey of all the literary work of Doughty from *Arabia Deserta* to the revised version of *Mansoul*. Mr. Fairley insists on the fundamental unity of this work, and does away with the legend of a Doughty as a *homo unius libri*, with the distinction so often made between the supreme achievement of *Arabia* and the wrongheaded failure of the poems. No doubt Mr. Fairley's admiration for Doughty is more uncompromising and all-round than, as far as I am aware, that of any critic who has written of him. But before the probable verdict of posterity he is, I think, on the safe side. Nor does his admiration become idolatry: as other critics have done he recognises a break in Doughty's career, a moment when the artist lost his power of expression and his work began to degenerate—only he places the critical moment not between *Arabia* and *The Dawn in Britain*, but between *Adam Cast Forth* and *The Cliffs*.

I have committed myself to the opinion that the fame of Doughty, prose-writer and poet, is likely to grow, and that posterity will recognise him as one of the great figures of pre-war Europe—a great writer and a great man, even in a sense, a hero. And, strange though it may seem, the name with which his appears to me to be coupled in the future is that of Arthur Rimbaud. There may seem little in common between the calm dignity of Doughty and the disreputable adventurousness of Rimbaud, but—apart from the superficial (is it so superficial, after all?) fact that both of them were travellers in Arabian lands—they have other and obviously profounder points of likeness. Both of them realised, what the thinking part of our generation has realised after them, that our civilization had taken a wrong track and that a heroic effort was needed to derail it. This is what makes Doughty—who would himself have scornfully disclaimed all taint of modernity—so essentially modern, so much a potential teacher of the most advanced of our generations. The way in which both Rimbaud and Doughty tried to transcend the falsities and limitations of modern civilization was the same: it was to strip man of all his assumptions and excrescences and place him face

to face with the ultimate realities, above all with the external world ; but, while stripping him, not to dissolve his personality—to immerse him in the destructive element stripped, but whole. This wholeness, this preservation of the flint-like hardness and solidity of the human kernel is what distinguishes Rimbaud and Doughty from “ primitives ” of the type of Mr. D. H. Lawrence ; an all-important saving point. The whole world appears to them under the aspect of the same flint-like solidity and hardness. Hence in the work of both men a certain absence of atmosphere, of ambient, an approach to external things, not with the eye, but with the hand, not to their appearance, but to their volume (and, of course, Cézanne is third in their company). Hence, as Mr. Edgell Rickword has so well pointed out, the absence of all suggestiveness in the poetry of Rimbaud, for he grasps his objects not with a vague and infinite eye, but with a firm and limited hand. Hence, what Mr. Fairley calls the “ low horizons ” of Doughty ; his laborious and essentially finite building up of the outer world from a not far-reaching centre, as if he could see only as far as his arm could eventually grasp—which strikingly reminds one of the genesis of man’s sense of space as reconstituted by Henri Poincaré. Hence also, I think, Doughty’s careful avoidance of fluency in his rhythm and syntax—his elimination of all verbal buffers that serve to soften the clash of the “ real ” words (definite articles, auxiliary verbs, etc.)—resulting in a jagged, jolting, discontinuous rhythm which is so contrary to the usual practice of English poets, and which has such obvious affinities with Anglo-Saxon verse. Unfortunately Mr. Fairley scarcely mentions this topic, which certainly would deserve more detailed investigation. Nor does he say anything of the certainly curious likeness of Doughty’s rhythmical practice to that of Gerard Hopkins, his contemporary, but with whom he probably had no acquaintance—both were effective workers in destroying the “ Spenserian ” fluency of English verse. As for Spenser and Doughty, Mr. Fairley has no difficulty in showing that, whatever his sentimental attachment, Doughty as a poet owed nothing to “ Master Edmund.”

The greater part of the book deals with the poetic work of Doughty, and this will be the most directly useful to the reader. Many readers who have been deterred by the six volumes of *The Dawn in Britain* will find Doughty a less forbidding poet in the admirably chosen quotations of Mr. Fairley.

Mr. Mégroz’s *Francis Thompson* is not as good a book as Mr. Fairley’s. But in one respect it comes near to it : the choice of quotations is excellent. Mr. Mégroz seems to be well at home in mystical literature, and what he has to say on the essential difference between the intellectual mysticism of Patmore and the organic mysticism of Thompson is very much to the point, as well as all his discussion of the subject of Thompson’s dependence on Patmore, which he rightly holds to be superficial and inessential. But the book is diffuse, and Mr. Mégroz never seems to be able to get proper hold of his subjects ; his words are usually only in the vicinity of what he is really thinking. So it requires a constant and painful effort to follow him. The book is further marred by two perfectly grotesque chapters on *Bedouin and Spanish Romance* and on *The Spiritualizing of Love*. Mr. Mégroz seems never to have heard of Plato (which is strange in a student of mysticism) and imagines that the medieval and modern European conception of ideal love is of oriental origin. This is the way I imagine the chapters grew up : he was told by some one, who had in mind the mystical love-poetry of the Sufis, that the poetry of idealized and sublimated love may be found in Arabia. Being no oriental scholar, he forgot about the Sufis and, retaining only the reference to Arabia, went to the first book of translations from the Arabic that occurred to him, which happened to be Wilfrid Blunt’s translation of the Moàllakàat, and, bent on finding what he wanted, found several passages on love cast in an obviously

conventional mould and strongly reminiscent of the *Song of Solomon*. So he decided that this is the source and origin of all the European romantic and idealizing conception of love. There are, of course, many words on "Arab poetry penetrating medieval Europe through the Moors" of Spain. Which may or may not be true, but of which Mr. Mégroz knows nothing, for he is not even acquainted with the very rich and very un-Bedouin love-poetry of the Spanish and Sicilian Arabs, of which there is a good and well-known German anthology (by Count von Schack). All this has no relation to Thompson and is tacked on to him for the only reason that he once chanced to write an "Arab Love-Song."

Miss Maclean has written a not very striking, but agreeable, book in praise of Dorothy Wordsworth. She rightly insists on the importance of her influence on her brother, and presents a succession of excellently chosen, and wholly beautiful, quotations from Dorothy's writings. But she goes too far when she calls Dorothy the greatest prose-writer of her time, explicitly placing her above De Quincey. For if it may in a certain sense be true that her prose is "at once stronger and more delicate" than De Quincey's it only follows that strength and delicacy, as Miss Maclean understands them, are not enough to claim superiority over prose that is great poetry.

The most obvious thing to be said about *The Light Reading of our Ancestors* is that it is itself light reading. It is a discursive and pleasant, well-informed but not too profound survey of fiction, Greek, Latin and English, from the *Milesian Tales* to Scott. The earlier chapters especially (before Defoe) may be read with profit by many readers. For a man of his generation Lord Ernle is curiously hard on the Victorian novelists, who, he seems to say, added no new achievement to the work of their predecessors. The Victorian novel he thinks "is preserved neither by the imperishable touch of art, nor by the salt of sincerity to life." Whatever we may think of the "sincerity" of Dickens or the Brontës, the word art is certainly used here in a sense that was more usual in the 'eighties and 'nineties than it is to-day.

Authorship in the Days of Johnson is not as lively a book as it might have been, but it seems to be a thorough economic history of the literary profession in the eighteenth century. The stand of the "booksellers" for their monopoly, and the vicissitudes of that monopoly, is a curious episode in the history of the market. The figure of Pope stands out very much to his credit as the first prominent man of letters who steadily discouraged patronage, and established the new *bourgeois* type of author, entirely dependent on the demand for his books. The book is marred by frequent (and obvious) misprints in dates, which make one suspicious of the figures of prices and sums of money.

D. S. MIRSKY

DRAMATIC LITERATURE

A HISTORY OF LATE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY DRAMA. By ALLARDYCE NICOLL. Cambridge University Press. 16s.

THE GENTLE ART OF THEATRE-GOING. By JOHN DRINKWATER. Holden. 6s.

CUES AND CURTAIN CALLS. By H. C. NEWTON. Lane. 12s. 6d.

THE CONTEMPORARY THEATRE, 1926. By JAMES AGATE. Chapman & Hall. 7s. 6d.

THERE have always been a few books which, like Johnson's *Lives* or Bradley's *Shakespearean Tragedy* go so in hand with their subject that mention of one invariably calls up the other, and such books have been overlaid in our time by productions that, promising authority on obscure fields wisely left virgin, actually offer gossip, slender reviewing and mere names.

Professor Nicoll's book, however, is one of those rare works it was once possible to call "contributions to their subjects." The excellence of the history even gives something to the subject. Professor Nicoll is so used to his knowledge that he does not over-awe, and though there are pages that consist of little else but play-titles, as many as forty on a page, a veritable bombardment of italics, these, after all, can be skipped, as may the many instances of the same point which Professor Nicoll's learning forces him to quote. Two appendices give a list of the theatres and a list of the plays from 1750-1800; these indicate the thoroughness of the work, which goes into every form of dramatic entertainment, though to the musical side Professor Nicoll gives less than its due. But there is scarcely a page on which some involved tendency is not summed up, and some dramatist's attainment given in a line, and the style does not fill the mind with decoration, at the expense of easy retention, however unhappy "the risible element" as a phrase may be.

Chapters on German influence and sentimental comedy are specially valuable, and so is the author's stand against regarding the period, 1750-1800, as entirely "the age of Goldsmith and Sheridan."

The School for Scandal is not, as so many critics have pointed out, entirely a miracle in the year 1777.

and again,

Colman gave two excellent comedies to the theatre, as did Macklin the actor. Mrs. Inchbald was a capable writer of sentimental comedy. Murphy has a comic sense all his own and Holcroft possesses a sterling quality.

It is that, ultimately, that is the trouble. It is very well for the author to define the aim of his work as being "an effort to present, not only the major dramatic works of the age, but also the general theatrical fare of the period under discussion," but that does not make all the fare worth discussion. There are too many plays applauded here because of one witty character or one good act, too many plays "by no means to be despised," or "a fair specimen of the type," and when *The Orators* is mentioned because "the idea of having actors speaking from the boxes is a good one," the reader may feel that Professor Nicoll is taking his own needles into the haystack with him.

It would not matter, were this the only century, but there have been many centuries before it and two after ; we could find "capable, if not brilliant, productions" in most of them, and then appraisal would have to begin all over again. It is these "capable" works, these authors without vision, that are menaces to art. Mediocrity may be golden, but it should share that epithet with silence, and its failure to do so should not receive consideration in terms of art, nor can a mathematical age find much satisfaction in the spectacle of two and two very nearly making three, which is what most of these playwrights offer. Professor Nicoll's is a grateful work, but it would find more adherents were his fondness for addition tempered by more subtraction.

The author of *Abraham Lincoln* has produced a dreadfully broad-minded book. You can see on every page how broad-minded it is—little comparisons with Vermeer (of Delft) softened by sporting metaphors and man-in-the-street phrases—and you can tell how happy Mr. Drinkwater would be were you to feel he goes to the theatre with Millais on one arm and Milligan on the other. But, actually, there is very little theatre-going in the book. In fact, he only takes his man-in-the-street ("You're as good as me, and I'm a little better than you") to the theatre twice—once to *The Ringer*, once to *Juno and the Paycock*. It might be wished that the visits had been to some of the other plays that prove to Mr. Drinkwater in what a good state the theatre is. There is a list : it includes *Outward Bound* and *The Truth about Blayds*, but not *The Three Sisters*, or *Six Characters*. The truth is, as he admits, that he likes to give his "theatre of the imagination" a rest sometimes, and in the theatre imagination is so plentiful, you need have no qualms about your rest. Also, you cannot have everything, and Mr. Drinkwater, his touch not being light, wisely abandons, after having tried, the Lamb method and talks of the things he has done and learnt in repertory, playwriting, producing, criticising (illuminatingly) and many other things not closely connected, at first sight, with theatre-going, which word in a title leads one to expect one is going on an armchair visit, as the travel touts say, to the theatre. He even includes several pages on the cinema, which, Heaven be praised, cannot yet be reduced to a "gentle" art. Why dramatic critics should feel themselves fitted to talk of films I never can see. It always seems to me odd to use the position reached by reviewing one art as a means of denouncing another. Mr. Drinkwater, though he has been a dramatist, has also been a poet, and he should know better. It is no use to anyone to observe that the cinema "is a world in which the conditions of art do not prevail at all," and then to add hastily "I am speaking now, it must be remembered, of the moving picture as an art comparable to that of the theatre."

Literary painting has gone out of fashion ; we now have painting like sculpture. We try to have poems like music and music like mathematics. We really do not want dramatic criticism of the "movies." Artists are confused : it would be of some help for the critics not to be. This critic blandly reveals the confusion in his mind :

The poet, the composer, the painter will all continue to do their work even though it should never bring them a penny of the few that they have to get in some other way to keep them from starving . . . But if you eliminated money considerations, and big money considerations at that, from cinema enterprise, the whole thing would have come to an end in a month. It is not conceivable that anyone would go on making moving picture scenarios merely for the purpose of satisfying his spiritual necessities.

And if you eliminated money considerations from sculpture, where would that art be ? Where would Cellini have been without patrons ? O, he would have modelled in mud !—very well, the scenario-writers would have resumed writing stories. Eliminating money considerations, where would ballet be ? Do many choreographers

compose ecstatically ballet after ballet with no hope of ever seeing designers, composers, dancers and dressmakers combine to materialise them? And is not this art, by its elaboration, far nearer the cinema than any of the older ones of Mr. Drinkwater's contrast? Poets and composers use only pen and ink to embody their inspiration; scenario-writers need more, for the screen has a larger grasp of material, and this perhaps makes it less easy of comprehension than samplers in "warm and frosted wools."

Mr. Newton's kindly book of reminiscences is one of those without which I have come to feel that no chronicle of Dramatic Literature would be complete. The matter is the familiar matter, Tree and Irving, and the style has room for the word "sanguifolious." The author says in his prologue:

However these Stories of the Stage may be regarded from the angle of meritoriousness they can certainly bespeak consideration from the veracity angle.

That is the language of an age withdrawn. It is impossible to believe that quite such stories, so obviously enjoyed, will issue from the new stage-door of the Vaudeville. *Les lauriers sont coupés*—but though it is useless going to the woods any more, the wreaths can be handled and dwelt on. These books, tired as one may be of them, have a period interest. They are another side of the life which produced the mother-of-pearl inkstand I find myself using, and I dearly wish I had velvet frames in which to put the photo of Fechter as Hamlet, of Laurence Irving in a cycling suit, or of E. S. Willard, moustached and monocled, in a quilted smoking-jacket, as the Spider in *The Silver King*.

The interest of Mr. Agate's volume is also period, but the period is future-perfect. Time will give these annual collections a value which (as with my inkstand) their original owners never saw in them. It will be interesting, one day, to see what the ordinary man thought of the ordinary plays of his time; it is so now, to see what he makes of the extraordinary ones. Mr. Agate is usually sound (that is the word) as far as he goes, and they, then, when the perpetuating of these weekly criticisms seems very valiant, will have forgotten he never went very far—whilst we at present find him a relief among critics who persist in going too far.

ROBERT HERRING

PHILOSOPHY

PHILOSOPHY OF THE RECENT PAST : AN OUTLINE OF EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN PHILOSOPHY SINCE 1860. By RALPH BARTON PERRY. Scribner. 10s. 6d.

SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY AND OTHER ESSAYS. By BERNARD BOSANQUET. Allen & Unwin. 16s.

HOLISM AND EVOLUTION. By General the Right Hon. J. C. SMUTS. Macmillan. 18s.

TOWARDS THE OPEN : A PREFACE TO SCIENTIFIC HUMANISM. By HENRY CHESTER TRACY, with an Introduction by JULIAN HUXLEY. Chatto & Windus. 12s. 6d.

AN ADVENTURE IN MORAL PHILOSOPHY. By WARNER FITE. Methuen. 10s. 6d.

NOTES ON THE ORIGINALITY OF THOUGHT : THE CONCEPT OF INTERNAL NECESSITY : POETIC THOUGHT AND CONSTRUCTIVE THOUGHT. By LEONE VIVANTE, translated by Professor BRODRICK-BULLOCK. Lane. 7s. 6d.

THE MEANING OF MEANING : A STUDY OF THE INFLUENCE OF LANGUAGE UPON THOUGHT AND OF THE SCIENCE OF SYMBOLISM. By C. K. OGDEN and I. A. RICHARDS, with Supplementary Essays by B. MALINOWSKI and F. G. CROOKSHANK. Second edition revised. Kegan Paul 12s. 6d.

THOSE who seek some general information as to the currents of recent philosophical thought and their interrelation will be well advised to turn to *Philosophy of the Recent Past*, by Professor R. B. Perry, of Harvard. His range in time is from 1860 to the present day, and in space embraces all Europe and English-speaking America. In the surprisingly short space of 223 pages he contrives to give a lively, accurate, and thorough description of the main features of the philosophical scene. He is worth reading as well as valuable for reference ; but the book will fail of its aim unless it sends readers to the authors themselves. Professor Perry's book, if read intelligently, will be found a real help to understanding in any part of the field covered.

The characteristic weakness of such a survey is excessive attention to novelties and new departures. One might have cited Bernard Bosanquet as a typical case. The one paragraph devoted to him concedes by way of amends that his work is "rich in incidental insight." How true in general this is, a volume of Bosanquet's collected papers comes aptly to remind us. The papers deal with the most various subjects, but are all philosophical and most have already appeared in philosophical periodicals. When they are controversial, they are nearly always engaged in defending some classic philosophical position, or some belief of common sense, against a novelty. A good example is the criticism of Croce's *Aesthetic* with which the volume closes. As a whole—and they make more of a whole than such volumes commonly do—they are a fine record of a life of active and penetrating thought, enriched by an easy and unassuming mastery of the best that the past has given us

and held together in the unity of a finished and gracious personality. But Bosanquet never took out a patent for anything he said ; never ran one hare to death (as Royce did his "loyalty") ; and never labelled himself or his teaching. Hence he is of little use to the surveyor in the triangulation by which his work proceeds.

General Smuts, on the other hand, has chosen himself a label like any American. His fundamental idea is "Holism" ; and this term is to stand, he tells us, for "both a concept and a factor." As a concept it stands for all wholes, and wholes are "the ultimate creative centres of reality." It is also a factor, because the universe is not a whole of wholes : there is another factor (or factors) with which holism is at issue. Further, thirdly, "holism" may stand for the philosophic attitude which gives this emphasis to wholes and whole-making ; and in this sense General Smuts is a holist and his philosophy holism. These are, roughly, the author's own definitions, but in the actual development of his thesis he seems never to use the word for the totality of wholes—a use for which its termination really disqualifies it—but either for the doctrine, or for a factor in a relative whole which tends to make it more of a whole and controls the parts in that sense.

It is not quite clear whether General Smuts' message is addressed primarily to scientists or philosophers. He deplores the divorce of the two lines of thought. "The pursuit of the separate paths of science and philosophy will not bring us to our goal. Their roads must be made to converge." Probably he conceived himself to be addressing both. In endorsing Dr. Haldane's plea for new categories in physiology, he seems to suggest that physics also requires such a readjustment. Philosophy, on the other hand, must give up its preoccupation with generalities, and make a more determined effort to master the material presented by the sciences. In the sciences everywhere mechanism is now breaking, if not broken, down : in nature at every level wholes are found ; and a whole, in its character as a whole, is self-determined. The situation requires a more philosophic science and a more scientific philosophy.

General Smuts develops this thesis on a wide front with power and tenacity. It is likely that both scientists and philosophers will accuse him of a certain lack of subtlety which is apt to leave the application of his idea somewhat vague at critical points in his argument. But he writes always with force and vigour, not seldom with real eloquence, and his book should attract a wide circle of readers. It will be interesting to see what fate his idea has. For in essence what he advocates is a return to the Aristotelian point of view, modified inevitably by the concession of the reality of Time and Evolution. The Form as immanent end of every created thing ; soul as form of body ; a world of formed matter, which is not in its aggregate the matter of a single dominant form ; but within that world form superimposed on form to make beings of higher complexity and perfection—these are Aristotle's characteristic ideas. Every one of them is prominent in General Smuts' pages ; but the conception of form and the name of Aristotle are not mentioned. Will the scientist who fears the gifts of the Greeks follow the Boer general ?

Mr. Henry Chester Tracy is, as Professor Julian Huxley's introduction tells us, "a biologist for whom biology is but a foundation." His declared aim is to show "how far the verifiable facts of organic life shed light on human relations." But it is often difficult to detect the biological basis of his thought. His speculations are essentially ethical ; and many writers who are not biologists have made more use of biology in this context than he has. Like most scientists, when they turn to ethics and politics, Mr. Tracy is an individualist and an aristocrat at heart ; but unlike many he has a positive content for his individualism. For him everything turns on the creation of "significant persons" from "the unforced leisure of the Earth." Such a product

our standardised education and our democratic machines will never yield : they are a hindrance, not a help. To get the fullness and the riches of life a man must rise above utilities and cultivate what may be called in the widest sense the artistic intuition, the attitude which finds things and persons significant for themselves. "Artistic insight is the only mode by which the content of experience may be grasped as a unity and a value apart from its relation to want and will." Mr. Tracy is impressionist, unsystematic, a little too much inclined, like all American free-thinkers, to rail at his time ; but he has a synthesis of his own which gives weight and solidity to his writing.

Mr. Warner Fite, who is Professor of Philosophy at Princeton, writes his *Adventure in Moral Philosophy* from a very different background and starting-point, but represents a very similar ethical tendency. He too is an individualist and likes to call himself a humanist. His defence of the old Greek heresy, "virtue is knowledge," taken in conjunction with his refusal to separate the values of truth, beauty and goodness, brings him close to Mr. Tracy's central idea. In temper, however, they are far apart. Mr. Fite's academic elegance contracts sharply with Mr. Tracy's fervour ; and his "self-conscious living of life" (surely a very inadequate definition of morality) is a long way from Mr. Tracy's dash for the open. It is Mr. Tracy, not Mr. Fite, that is the adventurer. Mr. Fite's pleasant and discursive essay plays prettily with a number of ideas, but does not master any of them. His paradoxes are pointed enough perhaps to stimulate the general reader, but will hardly pierce the thick hide of the philosopher.

Signor Vivante's *Notes on the Originality of Thought* is essentially a contribution to aesthetic. In obedience to a theory that in this way the spontaneity of thought is best preserved, he gives us a series of observations rather than a connected treatise. The degree of sequence varies. Thus thirty pages or so are given to a series of elaborate comments on passages in Professor M'Dougall's recent *Outline of Psychology* ; and another twenty pages embody a continuous paper on Art and Dreams previously printed in the *New Criterion*. The central thesis, on which these controversies with the psychologists turn, is the freedom of thought—a thesis quite as necessary and important as that of the freedom of will, though much less prominent in philosophical writing. The necessity of thought is an internal necessity, and this inner necessity, which is what "logic" ought to mean, is more fully realised in poetry, where thought is at its highest power, than in prose. Some of his observations are hard to follow : but he is full of good remarks.

Messrs. Ogden and Richards' perverse, but acute and stimulating discussion of symbolism, entitled *The Meaning of Meaning*, thoroughly deserved to go into a second edition ; and now that after three years a second edition is called for, we hope this means that it is beginning to attract the attention of those who are responsible for the teaching of elementary logic in our academies. The authors prefer to regard themselves as psychologists rather than as philosophers, and profess themselves the heralds of a new science of symbolism. But the logician need not be deterred by these professions. His discipline is sadly in need of new life ; and perhaps the most promising direction in which a new basis for the preliminary stages may be sought is by way of systematic attention to the forms of word-symbolism. But the book is by no means only for logicians. Any reader who does not mind being put through from time to time a rather severe exercise in mental gymnastic will derive both profit and entertainment from these pages.

J. L. STOCKS

TOPOGRAPHY

E. V. LUCAS'S LONDON. Methuen. 20s.

LOST LONDON. By E. BERESFORD CHANCELLOR. Pictured by J. CROWTHER. Constable. 63s.

THE LONDON SCENE. By LEWIS MELVILLE and AUBREY HAMMOND. Faber & Gwyer. 12s. 6d.

WHERE LONDON SLEEPS. By WALTER GEORGE BELL. The Bodley Head. 7s. 6d.

THE FRINGES OF EDINBURGH. By JOHN GEDDIE. Chambers. 7s. 6d.

THE PERAMBULATOR IN EDINBURGH. By JAMES BONE. Cape. 12s. 6d.

THE EARLY HISTORY OF PICCADILLY, LEICESTER SQUARE, AND SOHO. By C. L. KINGSBRIDGE. Cambridge University Press. 12s. 6d.

QUEEN'S SQUARE. By G. H. HAMILTON. Parsons. 10s. 6d.

MR. PICKWICK'S PILGRIMAGES. By WALTER DEXTER. Chapman & Hall. 18s.

MR. LUCAS has woven his two books on London—*The Wanderer in London* and *London Re-visited*—with the addition of some new matter, into a complete whole, which will probably rank for some time as the best guide book of its kind for London. It is indeed too large to carry about with you—the main use of a guide book; on the other hand it is quite satisfactory for the armchair; for it is very readable, with those graceful turns of expression, those humorous asides and that happy choice of adjectives which we are accustomed to look for in Mr. Lucas's work, and with that thorough appreciation of the many sides of Cockney life which he is so successful in communicating to the reader. True, the welding of the two books is not always complete; the joins are distinctly visible in places; and in the next edition the number of passages in which matters and places not yet dealt with are alluded to as having gone before (and vice versa) must be reduced. And, when he is preparing that second edition, he will no doubt note that he has made the erection of Temple Bar too early and that he has mistakenly placed London University still in Burlington Gardens. Perhaps, too, he will make further enquiries into the authenticity of the attribution of the house at the corner of Friday Street and Cheapside to a pre-Fire era. Of course it is difficult to keep pace with demolitions; the sixteenth-century houses in Cloth Fair are gone, and Birch's shop is gone too.

Mr. Lucas's delight in London is infectious. He finds it all very good, even the Albert Memorial, and with this book should be read Mr. Beresford Chancellor's letterpress to a series of charming drawings made by J. Crowther between 1879 and 1887 to the commission of Sir Gerald Chadwyck-Henley of such places as seemed then likely shortly to disappear. Sixty of these drawings are reproduced, and in turning them over old memories are stirred in every Londoner who has entered his sixth decade. Wych Street with its sagging roofs and overhanging storeys, those galleried inns, the Gun House in Spring Gardens, the Almonry in Whitehall, those quaint little squares and inoffensive alleys tucked away behind the Strand in the vain hope of being overlooked, those comfortable suburban mansions in Stockwell and Vauxhall—did they really exist in my youth? Crowther was prescient, for, of all the houses

depicted in these sixty plates but two survive—one is the house from which this journal is published and the other, the Raven Inn at Battersea ; the latter sadly altered. As Mr. Lucas observes “ He who would see London before London becomes unrecognisable must hasten his steps.” There is one gleam of comfort. Fine and dignified buildings, to many of which Mr. Lucas calls attention, are now rising in all directions to replace the old—and this is more than could have been said forty years ago.

No greater contrast can be imagined than that between the serene and accomplished drawings we have just been looking at and Mr. Aubrey Hammond’s clever but brutal sketches—the chief feature of Mr. Lewis Melville’s *London Scene*, a work which seeks apparently to do for the London of to-day what the late G. A. Sala’s *Twice Round the Clock* did for the London of sixty years ago, and leaves the (probably false) impression that in variety and colour the latter-day London has sadly deteriorated. Mr. Melville’s experience, if not as profound as Sala’s, is still extensive and we learn some curious facts from his pages ; as, for instance, that the London barmaid, that tall, golden-haired, haughty damsel has disappeared, that the stage door ritual of the gilded youth is a thing of the past, that the night-club is insufferably dull and that the late T. W. H. Crosland, that very unsympathetic type of journalist, was a “ fellow of infinite jest.” The clever draughtsmanship of Mr. Hammond illuminates the not very exciting pages.

Too long has the adjective “ suburban ” been appropriated for all that is vulgar, pretentious and smug. After all, most of us are suburban and now that Mr. Bell has brought his gift for topographical research to bear upon those districts *Where London Sleeps* we need hang our heads no longer. Here they are, the little villages crystallised into the great town, but still bearing the traces of their origin. In all of them some remnants of pre-suburban days survive. Streatham still has its medicinal well with old well-house “ brick built, snow white under its coat of paint, a low structure of typical Georgian façade with high arched doorways, and in a niche above the door stands the sculptured bust of old Æsculapius, the father of healing.” But it was not the well to which the Thrales came with Dr. Johnson. When the present writer “ took the waters ” here, one of perhaps half a dozen daily drinkers, this old house was alone in a field at the bottom of a pastoral valley. Now it stands embedded in a modern factory, the twentieth-century product of the great dairy business built up by the owners of the fields and the well house, which they have carefully and even lovingly preserved. Mr. Bell tells us also about the Grand Surrey Iron railway from Merstham to Wandsworth the track of which is still discernible alongside the Brighton Road ; the “ Beth Ahaim,” at the back of the Mile End Road, as near to the high road and almost as forgotten, but just as historic a landmark, for it “ marks the rebirth of London’s Jewry ” ; the last abode of Pepys at Clapham ; the old Church at Chelsea ; the New River at Islington ; highwaymen at Hounslow ; Charles Peace at Peckham, and many other strange and curious relics of people and industry.

Edinburgh is even more happily situated than London. The first reason for this is that since 1922 its suburbs have been taken into the area of the city and we may hope that their inevitable development will take place on more ordered and seemly lines than has been the case in the larger metropolis. The second is that these same suburbs now included in the municipal boundary surpass those of London in beauty, and are quite as full of interest. They are, in the consecrated phrase, redolent of romance ; with ruined castles and snuff mills, peel towers and medieval stone bridges over brawling burns. In the seventeenth-century manse at Colinton Stevenson passed his boyhood, at Liberton the syringa which Walter Scott’s bride planted still blossoms beside

the thresholds, it was at Bonaly that Cockburn "read Tacitus through from cover to cover," and gathered about him all the sages and wits of Edinburgh's palmy days, at Morton Hall St. Catherine let fall a drop of the sacred oil she was carrying from Mount Carmel (and so there bubbled up the St. Catherine's balm well, which still bubbles, with some suspicion of petroleum impregnation) and to the famous Craigmillar came Mary Queen of Scots after the murder of Rizzio.

These are the fringes of that northern city which has been placed for beauty second to Oxford amongst the cities not only of Britain but of Europe. Mr. Bone analyses the elements of that beauty, but when all has been said the ineffable charm defies description. "Edinburgh, as it were, goes to one's head, so crowded, vivid and sounding are the impressions she breaks about her . . . She is a thing of history, worn and stained with old deeds and great days, starred with burning names." Where else do you meet anything like those fierce little closes, the "towering aged *lands* of rough stone, over against the massive dignity of its noble successor"? Mr. Bone's vigorous and dignified English abounds in telling phrases. Leith Walk is the street for the "epicure of topography," the tall houses of the High Street are a "Piranesian rhetoric in stone." And to add to our delight are the melodious etchings of Mr. Lumsden who has done as well for this book as Mr. Muirhead Bone did for that on London.

In *Queen Square* and in *Piccadilly, Leicester Square, and Soho*, we have two serious contributions to our knowledge of London topography. The first is by Mr. Hamilton who is the Secretary of the National Hospital, Queen Square, and who has collected all the prints and engravings which illustrate it. Many of these he reproduces, and he has with great industry discovered the history of every house in the Square, once very fashionable, now, as the author thinks, destined to be a centre for houses of healing. It is an excellent piece of topography and so, on a much larger scale and with a much greater variety of interest is the work, undertaken for the London Topographical Society by Mr. Kingsford, whose recent death is so great a loss to topographical knowledge. It is based on a plan drawn in 1585 and with the help of a great mass of later material and many old maps and plans he has reconstructed the history of the district. From a map published by Philip Lea in 1673 it would appear that an attempt was made to plan out the district between Piccadilly and Oxford Street along the axis of a straight street between and parallel to these two, but that private interests (as in the case of Wren's design for London) prevented the accomplishment of this interesting project, so that we had the piecemeal development which actually took place, broken only by the fine piece of planning in 1813 when Regent Street was constructed as an improvement and continuation of Shrug Lane. This book is a perfect mine of information, and will serve as an inexhaustible quarry for the ever growing body of writers on London history.

Just one hundred years ago Mr. Pickwick started out on the first of these famous pilgrimages which have had the curious effect of immortalizing those who were never born and rendering certain towns and inns famous for events which never happened but which yet are as real to us to-day as if they had "gone through the formality of taking place." Hence Mr. Dexter's book, which, however, is a trifle disappointing. Beyond the identification of Eatonswill with Sudbury and Manor Farm, Dingley Dell with Cobtree, Sandling, there is little of topographical interest. The greater part of the book consists of long extracts from *Pickwick Papers*, and taken in this way I find the facetiousness of Charles Dickens sometimes—just a trifle—dreary. The Phiz drawings look as if they had been used too often.

H. G. CORNER

NATURAL HISTORY

FOREST, STEPPE AND TUNDRA. By MAUD D. HAVILAND (MRS. H. H. BRINDLEY). Cambridge University Press. 12s. 6d.

ANIMAL MIND. By FRANCES PITT. Allen and Unwin. 15s.

THE SCENT OF FLOWERS AND LEAVES. By F. A. HAMPSON. Dulau. 6s.

THE NATURAL HISTORY OF ANTS. By R. A. F. DE RÉAUMUR. Translated with Introduction and Notes by W. M. WHEELER. Knopf. 25s.

MICROSCOPIC FRESHWATER LIFE. By F. J. W. PLASKITT. Chapman & Hall. 13s. 6d.

FROM the unusual combination of literary verve and bionomic philosophy in Mrs. Brindley's *Forest, Steppe and Tundra*, one gains the impression that "Cheerfulness was always breaking in." Starting her introduction gaily enough with the cynic's summary of life as being "one damned thing after another", she tells us a few lines lower down that the existing systems of animal classification

are taxonomic, that is to say they are based on phylogenetic considerations, and express our views of the evolution of species and their morphological affinities.

It was, if I remember rightly, the late Sir Michael Foster, who made the whimsical complaint that even Fellows of the Royal Society were now no longer able to understand each other's language; and it is a complaint which could nowadays be urged in all seriousness. Much of our modern scientific terminology is illiterate and inexact; much of it merely "talking big;" while much would seem to have been concocted, like the jargon of the thieves' kitchen, or the stenography of the leech, of *malice prepense*. It is to Mrs. Brindley's credit that, with the exception of a few words, "bromelicolous," for example, she writes for the reader of ordinary intelligence; but she nevertheless often seems to be in two minds as to whether she should employ plain or scientific English. She uses the term "alate," for instance, meaning "winged" with considerable frequency; but she uses "winged" with equal frequency. She can write

The second great oecological feature in the steppe, the uniformity of the landscape, is modified by conditions, local or otherwise.

which is no doubt true, though perhaps a trifle bald: but she can also write of the "taiga," or "wooded zone," between tundra and steppe:

It seems as if the great wooded shoulder of the earth, rolling eastwards into the sunrise, awakes one songster after another, until Asia and Europe from the Pacific to the Atlantic, are linked together by a chain of thrushes' music.

which is a fine image.

Similar picturesque touches vivify her descriptions of the tropical forest and its fauna, though, in the case of the latter, she stresses the practical impossibility of making a close study of the tree-top environment, "a wide green expanse, strewn with flowers and open to the sun, rain and wind." The trunk-line approaches to this mysterious region are effectively guarded by stinging bees and ants; and our knowledge of its fauna is at present confined to windfalls, though more may perhaps yet be

learnt by the erection of wooden scaffoldings, such as are employed in French Guiana for the capture of resplendent and high-flying butterflies. Both the nature-lover and the naturalist will be grateful to Mrs. Brindley for her impartial *résumés* of modern theories in respect of hibernation and migration, and of the somewhat bewildering complications of mimicry and camouflage.

Miss Pitt, on the other hand, who has essayed to write a popular disquisition on an extremely difficult subject, animal mind, is if anything too naive. She has a poor opinion of the intelligence of horses, but she nevertheless rides that anything but sure-footed one, *Analogy* (by Speculation—Desire), at a break-neck pace from start to finish; and her falls, which are not infrequent, may perhaps be attributed to her *élan*. In stating for example, in *Animal Mind*, that there are practically no wild social animals in England, she has obviously forgotten the existence of rabbit holes, not to mention the normal associations of grass-mice, while in suggesting that northward migrating flocks of birds “find their way and keep their course by means of a sense of the magnetic north, i.e., are living compasses,” she has surely overlooked the antagonisms that would arise between two magnets flying side by side. No less unfortunate is her comparison of a terrified grass-mouse which devoured her own litter “because she so wanted to make them safe” with the unmarried mother who strangles her illegitimate baby. Does Miss Pitt seriously suggest a murine equivalent to Mrs. Grundy?

I cannot agree with her contention that the social mammals and birds are of a higher mentality than the non-social species. In mankind genius is essentially a solitary condition, intellect essentially a social condition, and instinct essentially a condition of survival. *Analogy* may extend to us the hope that the genius of one aeon may be merely the intelligence of the succeeding one, and the instinct of the next; but *analogy* emphatically does not teach us that the higher qualities of mind are evolved from co-operation. The human genius is, on the contrary, the arch rebel against the environment into which he happens to have been born, and which is accepted with complacency by the human herd. Moreover his rebellion is conscious, and a conscious rebellion against one's surroundings is in itself incompatible with the social habit. It does not of course follow that every malcontent is a potential genius; but it would be straining the meaning of words to speak of a conventional genius, or even a contented one. Miss Pitt is therefore quite right in stressing the individuality of animals as an indication of budding mental powers.

I have read Dr. Hampson's little manual on *Flower Scent* with great enjoyment. Smell is a very curious phenomenon. Our sensations of either the most delicate perfume, or the most appalling stench, are realised through the assaults of extremely minute and volatile particles of matter, which are wafted—or can they waft themselves?—into contact with the olfactory cells. Having performed their function of allurement, or the reverse, they are metamorphosed into something quite odourless, presumably by chemical, or close physical combination with the cells themselves. The human sense of smell becomes very quickly fatigued, perhaps one might say “saturated”; and Dr. Hampson makes the charitable suggestion that the unpopularity of such scents as musk, or patchouli, may be due to an acquired insensitiveness on the part of those addicted to their use. Most of the essential plant-oils used in perfumery would appear to be waste products which are poisonous to the living plants, and which are consequently enclosed in special cells or capsules. In close relation with their poisonous character is a germicidal or antiseptic one, which faintly justifies the traditional use of Rue and Rosemary at the Old Bailey, and may also be held to account for the cinnamon and camphor in the doctor's gold-headed cane. Dr.

Hampson holds that there may have been a real though unsuspected value in such precautionary measures, not so much in killing germs as in repelling germ-carriers such as bugs and lice. Attraction, however, seems to be at least as potent a *raison d'être* for scents as repulsion. In most flowers it is a combination of petal-colour and scent that attracts insects, and it is possible that both colour and scent have been evolved to that end. White flowers show the highest percentage of scented examples, and are followed by red, yellow, purple and blue. This order agrees so nearly with that of the spectrum colours of sunlight that one can hardly resist the inference that, in coloured flowers, absorption of the short high frequency waves "stirs up" the scent molecules.

It is curious that a manuscript of Réaumur's on the behaviour of ants should, though attention had more than once been called to its existence, have remained unpublished for nearly two hundred years in the Archives of the Academy of Sciences at Paris. Professor Wheeler has given this posthumous fragment a setting in which Réaumur himself, who for a generation was the acknowledged leader of French science, and whose genius as engineer, as physicist, and as entomologist, was recognised and deservedly acclaimed by his contemporaries, would have taken delight.

The Natural History of Ants consists of an essay on Réaumur's life and times, the text of the "ant" manuscript in French and English, two portraits, some forty pages of annotations, and a list of Réaumur's works. That Réaumur's pioneer work should make a special appeal to modern naturalists is due to the fact that he concerned himself with the industries of living animals rather than with their classification; and was indifferent to their structure, except in so far as the latter supplied the "tools of their trade." Réaumur preceded Linnaeus, and the classifications in vogue in his day were certainly not of a kind to appeal to a keen intellect. The insect system which he himself employed was no better than the rest, but that he was aware of its limitations, and indifferent to them, is shown by his placing of the crocodile:—"The crocodile is certainly a fierce insect, but I am not in the least disturbed about calling it one."

Professor Wheeler's notes are an interesting and valuable commentary. That some of Réaumur's observations should have been proved erroneous was to be expected, but one is more impressed by his anticipations of some of the most modern "discoveries," and by his detachment from an age in which the conclusion to a valuable memoir on English ants, that of the Rev. William Gould, could be penned as follows:

The chief and most obvious Design, hitherto discovered, of the noble Insect before us, is its being intended as Sustenance for many Species of Animals, but in particular for young Pheasants and Partridges. The tender Infancy of these Birds calls for an easy and delicious Repast, which is so happily contrived by the Disposition of Ants, as highly tends to exemplify the superior Wisdom and Beneficence of the great Creator.

Mr. Plaskitt has made a praiseworthy effort to provide a pictorial guide to pond life, but has sadly over-crowded his canvas. The subject, as a whole, is so vast and heterogeneous (algae, diatoms, rotifers, entomostraca, etc., etc.) as to call for a series of separate manuals, or, perhaps better from the beginner's point of view, of a volume devoted to, say, a year's catches in a single small pond or brook. Practically every page of *Microscopic Freshwater Life* introduces yet another minute form of life, common or local, and while this profusion of illustration and material may challenge the curiosity of the expert, who is probably already in possession of Ward and Whipple, it may merely bewilder the tiro, and may defeat its own end by deterring the prospective enthusiast.

DOUGLAS ENGLISH